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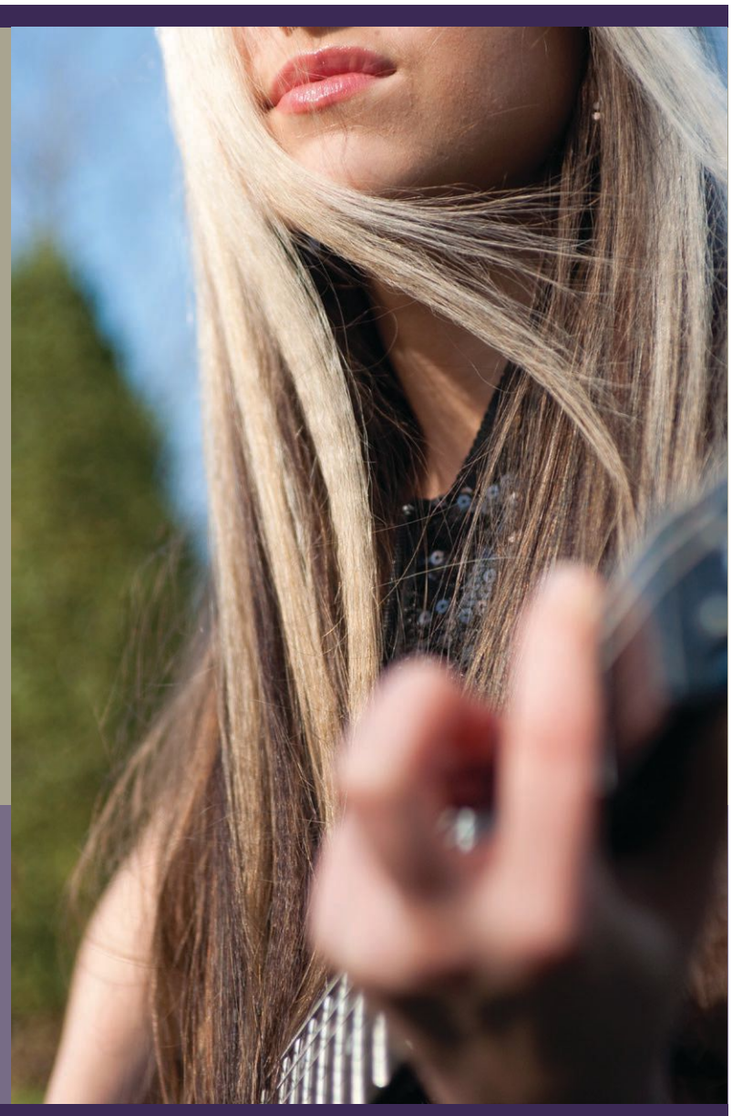

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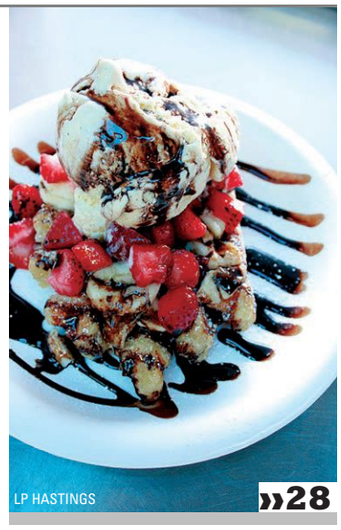
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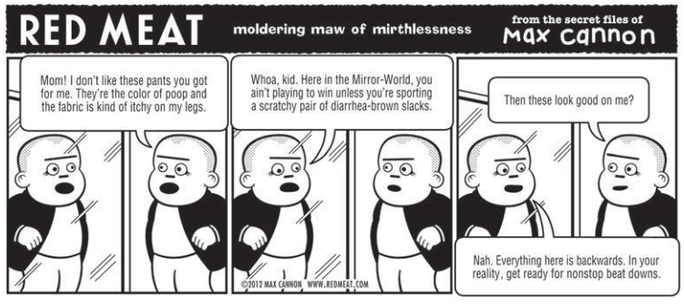

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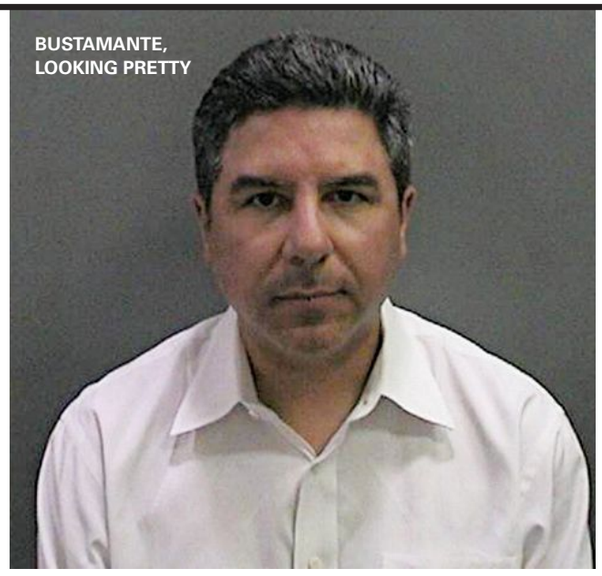
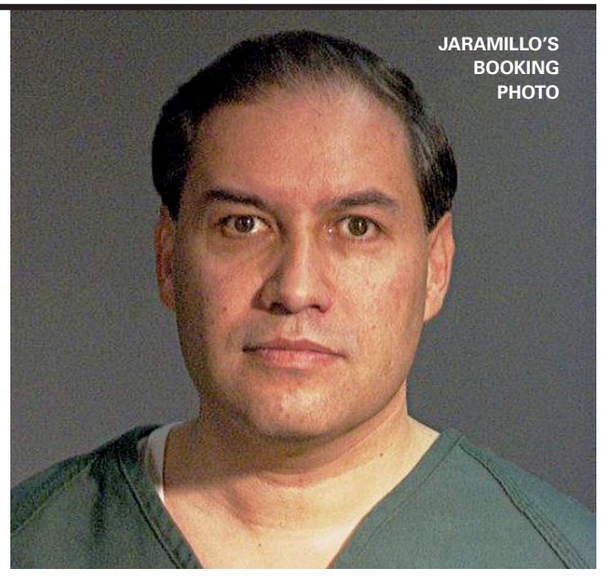
The Great Brown Flop

Disgraced Santa Ana councilman Carlos Bustamante is the latest OC GOP Latino golden boy gone *pendejo*

BY GUSTAVO ARELLANO



BUSTAMANTE, LOOKING PRETTY



JARAMILLO'S BOOKING PHOTO

Even in the notoriously low-expectation world of Orange County politics, Carlos Bustamante should've never had a chance. He was a man of limited intelligence, a Republican council member in overwhelmingly Democratic Santa Ana, and a *pendejo* who just never knew when to keep his mouth shut or his hands to himself. In 2008, Bustamante resigned from one California statewide commission seat and withdrew his nomination to another after making a sexist remark aimed at newly appointed Sheriff Sandra Hutchens. And on July 2, Orange County district attorney's office detectives arrested him on multiple counts of sex crimes, alleging that Bustamante had operated a reign of groping terror in his capacity as a manager for Orange County Public Works that involved his cornering frightened underlings in his office and doing everything from grabbing their breasts to wielding his baton, both literally (while talking about his law-enforcement connections to frighten his victims into silence) and perversely (masturbating in front of them with his, um, little baton).

And yet when Bustamante was led to the Orange County Jail that day, the biggest groans came not from his closest friends, but rather the leadership of the Republican Party of Orange County. Its problems with local Latinos are legendary, from poll guards to nasty anti-immigrant politics to the sad spectacle that was failed California gubernatorial and senator candidates Meg Whitman and Carly Fiorina downing tequila shots in 2010 during an awards ceremony in Newport Beach, a desperate attempt to prove the GOP could *fiesta*. That didn't stop local Latino leadership from spending thousands of dollars and numerous hours of mentorship over the years to groom Bustamante, to make him their future. Bustamante should've never had a chance for higher office, save for one factor: He was Latino.

So when news of Bustamante's arrest went national, the OC GOP leadership groaned. News reports kept referring to him as a former "rising star" in Republican circles, a continual reminder of party affiliation in a story that needed none. For a party that pretends ethnic politics doesn't exist (unless it's used as a wedge issue to get anti-Mexican Orange County voters to favor them over a Democrat) and professes to value individual merit above groupthink, it has continually, desperately tried to create over the past two decades a Great Brown Hope: a Latino Republican to whom it could point as proof it has evolved past its notorious reputation, a wab who might ascend to higher office and attract the Latino vote that now rules central Orange County and is marching across the rest of *la naranja* and the nation. But this effort has been similar to the Great Park: a fine idea in writing, one that finds initial success but ultimately proves an embarrassment that refuses to go away. Bustamante wasn't the party's first golden boy, but he just might be its last, the end to the GOP's sordid Manchurian Mexican experiment.

> Not even a month after his election, a Republican insider was gushing to the *Los Angeles Times* that Bustamante was "the face of the Republican Party of the future. We are very excited about him moving to higher public office."

BUSTAMANTE HAD EVERY CHANCE to ascend in Orange County politics—he certainly fit the right profile. A son of Mexican immigrants, a graduate of Mater Dei High School, an Air Force veteran, a seemingly happily married father of two young children, Bustamante burst onto the political scene in 2004, comfortably winning his first electoral race to sit on the Santa Ana City Council and represent the ritzy Floral Park neighborhood. He did this despite running against the political machine of longtime Santa Ana Mayor Miguel Pulido and with little GOP support at the time. But party elders quickly found religion: Not even a month after his election, a Republican insider was gushing to the *Los Angeles Times* that Bustamante was "the face of the Republican Party of the future. We are very excited about him moving to higher public office."

This wasn't the first time the county GOP swooned over a swarthy face. Twenty-five years ago, Gaddi Vasquez was appointed by then-Governor George Deukmejian to the Orange County Board of Supervisors; in 1988, he won conservative acclaim during the Republican National Convention when he attacked the idea that Latinos would automatically vote for Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis because he spoke Spanish. "He doesn't speak our language," said Vasquez—who always maintained he was a politician first, a "Hispanic" second—to the roar of the crowd. Political onlookers predicted the world for him—but Vasquez's political career came crashing down with the 1994 county bankruptcy, a political embarrassment that exiled him from public office for good.

As did Vasquez, Bustamante tried to deflect such expectations, claiming he only wanted to serve his constituents, but it was false modesty. In 2006, then-governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Bustamante to the California Council on Criminal Justice. By then, Republican handlers were prepping Bustamante to run for an open supervisorial seat. He lost badly to Janet Nguyen in 2007, despite scoring the support of three supervisors and the influential, deep-pocketed Lincoln Club, but that didn't stop Schwarzenegger from appointing him to the California Fair Employment and Housing Commission. There was even talk of having Bustamante's identical twin, Alfonso—a psychologist who's openly mocked in Santa Ana for driving around town in a white Bentley—join him on the Santa Ana City Council.

Alas, it wasn't to be. Despite the crude remark against Hutchens, Bustamante won a 2008 re-election campaign and participated through 2010 in GOP politics, hosting a fund-raiser for former state Senator Van Tran's futile race against Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez. But by then, Bustamante was ready to follow his Great Brown Hope destiny. Already, rumors of sexual impropriety swirled around him, ones Republicans always conveniently ignored (after Bustamante's arrest, former Santa Ana councilman Tom Lutz would tell *The Orange County Register*, "This is all very shocking to me. In saying that, of course I knew him as [a] flirt with the girls but thought that was just show and that's where it ended"). Bustamante survived two county internal investigations in 2011 into allegations he was a pervert before finally resigning—although not his Santa Ana council seat. Throughout this year, Bustamante nevertheless showed up around town, trying his best to appear chipper but no longer the arrogant *cabrón* with a once-bright future.

It's a pathetic path that most closely mirrors not Vasquez's career, but that of another OC GOP Great Brown Hope: George Jaramillo, the former assistant sheriff to disgraced Mike Carona. Jaramillo also had a rags-to-riches story his supporters trotted out whenever possible. As with Bustamante, Jaramillo had no real experience other than his ethnicity (he was Bolivian). And Jaramillo was also a known pig with rumors of sexual impropriety swirling around him. It remains to be seen if Bustamante will follow Jaramillo's path to jail.

GARELLANO@OCWEEKLY.COM

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¡ask a mexican!®

» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

DEAR MEXICAN: Magdalena has worked for me many years—15, to be exact. She came over as a *mojada* with her two little girls when they were 4 and 6. The girls went to school, but only until middle school because they are undocumented; they can't get a job or a bank account or a driver's license for the same reason. One of them is almost 30 and has three kids; somehow, she manages to work regularly. The other one has been sitting in jail for nearly two years because she hung out with the *cholo* crowd in her neighborhood. She never shot anyone or killed anyone and has no record, no papers, no school, no money and no car; she didn't want to clean homes like her mom. What is she supposed to do in Mexico, where they'd consider her a *pocha* and she knows no one? What can she do here as an undocumented American? She came with her mom and grew up here, and her main language is English. Of course, Obama has taken a small step to keep Mexis voting for him in November, but at least it is recognition that the problem exists. Why not just allow these kids to live here, pay taxes and be a part of the social fabric? *Que chingadera, como diríamos en México* . . .

Good Gabacha Boss

DEAR *GABACHA*: Although your question is problematic (you didn't tell me what the jailed sister is up for, and you should be more judgmental of your worker for letting her girls drop out of school as teenagers—for crying out loud, you have DREAMers getting advanced degrees, and if they can do it, Magdalena's *hijas* could have, as well), you also brought up an inadvertent point that should give pause to those Know Nothings who want immediate deportations of all illegals. During the 1980s and '90s, the United States government deported young Central American illegal immigrants who had joined the gang life. What did they do? They started gang chapters in their home countries, which connected with their *cliquas* up here, and turned a local problem into a transnational nightmare, with nearly 80,000 such gang members in Central America alone, according to a 2006 study by the USAID Bureau for Latin American and Caribbean Affairs Office of Regional Sustainable Development. The same thing happened in Mexico, except those deported *cholos* usually ended up in the services of the drug cartels—and we know what has happened there. Mass deportations of all illegal immigrants is much like Mitt Romney: seemingly plausible on paper, but a nightmare if it in fact happens.

DEAR MEXICAN: I'm a small woman, certainly too small to be pushing my car down the street toward a gas station when it breaks down, as it frequently does. My fellow Americans, driving new, big-ass-wheeled trucks and wearing faux-gangsta apparel, appear to think I am doing this to piss them off and slow them down because their response is to honk and scream at me. It is those gallant men in their beat-up vehicles (often packed with gardening equipment) from south of the border who pull over, jump out and lend me a *mano*. What's up with that?

Pequeña y Agradecida

DEAR PETITE, GRATEFUL *GABACHA*: You know why—because Mexicans, since the beginning of time, are AWESOME. Except for new president Enrique Peña Nieto, of course—*pinche puto pendejo baboso*.

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» ANONYMOUS

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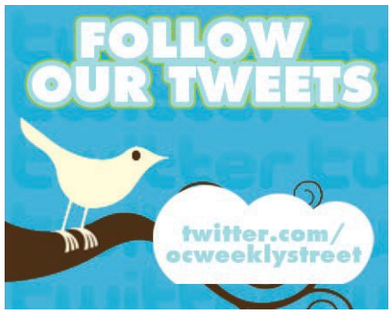

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All Along the Watchtower

Jehovah's Witnesses in Tustin get Christ all wrong—but they're really nice!

OCeeker
»JOSH DULANEY

Beware of extra books in the house o' God, ye heathen. If you find yourself in a reportedly Christian meeting and a Bible alone won't do, well, you better brace yourself for some spiritual chicanery.

Your slick-haired messiah recently visited **The Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses Orange Grove/Irvine**, where he took in a congregational Bible study among 100 of the faithful and saw some teaching and training tips that you fundies would do well to emulate.

The Kingdom Hall sits off **Pioneer Road** in **Tustin Ranch**. There are no crosses, as they believe **Jesus Christ** was plopped on a stake, and the "pagan symbol" of the cross was merely an evangelical tool that some early Christians used to make it easier for the lost to receive the faith.

Charles Taze Russell founded **Zion's Watchtower and Tract Society** in 1884. The religious magazines offered ye heathen by kind folks come from the New York-based Watchtower. After a group known as the **Dawn Bible Students** split from the organization in 1931, church members started calling themselves **Jehovah's Witnesses**. It was Russell—a Pittsburgh-born former Presbyterian who learned at the feet of Adventist **Charles Miller**, a man who predicted the end of the world would occur in 1843—who commanded his followers to study his teachings only, lest they find themselves in spiritual darkness. He believed the **Battle of Armageddon** began in 1874 and would end in 1914.

Modern-day Russellites deny core doctrines of Christianity, such as the deity of Christ and that He rose from the dead in His physical body. They also read from their church-published **New World Translation** of the **Holy Scriptures** and its revised **New Testament**, which was crapped out in 1950 to hoodwink the pew-sitters into thinking Jesus never claimed to be **God**. Check out this nifty translation of **John 1:1**. First, from the OCeeker's **New King James version**: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Now, the **J-Dubs' New World Translation**: "In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god."

Catch that, my disciples? Drop an article before the word "God," and Jesus gets demoted from the **Almighty** in the flesh to a garden-variety deity. Now, the OCeeker is plumb tuckered out from teaching ye heathen, so for homework, get your Google on and look up Jehovah's Witnesses and pyramids, vaccinations and birthday parties.

Still, Jehovah's Witnesses are the warmest bunch of believers the OCeeker has encountered. The congregation was a balanced mix of crackers, Mexis, *chinitos* and soul-brethren. The OCeeker was greeted by no less than a dozen J-Dubs, and one man, named after the disciple whom Jesus loved, offered to sit next to your rabbi to help him understand the service.

The disciple whom Jesus loved opened a song book, and he and the OCeeker sang praises side-by-side. Imagine **Yves Saint Laurent** standing next to **Larry the Cable Guy** in the house of the holy. Being as it was Bible-study night and all, the service was mostly a didactic proceeding filled with Scripture readings and teachings from a variety of church members who took the pulpit or spoke from the pews when a game show-esque usher delivered a microphone to them.

Two other neat things stood out: Everyone was called on by name, showing the church is a close-knit group that knows its members well, and children were allowed to participate. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the training of l'il heretics. We read from a Bible-study booklet focused on the **Acts of the Apostles**, specifically looking at how **St. Paul** ministered to believers and faced tribulations while preaching to angry mobs in **Jerusalem**. One sister in the congregation said the lesson she learned is that when a member of the church is going through trouble such as sickness, "we want to offer our time and help them and try to give some words of encouragement."

While earth-shattering insights weren't shared, it's encouraging to know that an Orange County congregation is paying attention to what is being taught.

Then it was time for skits, which were actually brief demonstrations of how to mindfuck the unsuspecting into accepting the religion. One involved a woman demonstrating how to help a struggling Bible student understand ways to apply the Scriptures to her life. Another, put on by two men, showed the congregation how to handle hostile people at the doorstep when they go witnessing. A final sketch saw a woman getting church magazines into the hands of a pagan.

Upon a final prayer, the disciple whom Jesus loved offered to visit **Chateau de Seeker** for a Bible study. Didn't happen. The OCeeker gave the service three out of five false prophets. The Jehovah's Witnesses rightly teach everything they get wrong.

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KING O

HOW DON WINSLOW BECAME A BEST-SELLING AUTHOR BY

DON WINSLOW,
LAGUNA'S TACO BARD

F COOL

DELVING INTO LAGUNA BEACH'S LEGENDS BY NICK SCHOU

PHOTO BY JOHN GILHOOLEY

FUCK TACO BELL.

This is what Don Winslow is probably thinking as he stands in line at the Taco Bell at 699 S. Coast Hwy. in Laguna Beach. It's a Tuesday morning in late June, and there's a photographer nearby snapping pictures of Winslow. The fat guy working the cash register is giving him the stink-eye, and the restaurant manager is waving his arms in the air.

"I told you already—no photos inside the restaurant," the manager whines.

"What are you complaining to me for, dude?" an innocent Winslow asks. "I'm just trying to buy a taco."

For the purposes of this story, Winslow is attempting to purchase a Doritos Locos Taco, a national sensation that's really nothing more than a steaming clod of cheesy beef dumped inside a stale, orange shell. He has no intention of eating the thing, which is just a prop for the surreptitious photo shoot. Later, over a trio of far more salubrious Baja-style fish tacos at 230 Forest Avenue in downtown Laguna, Winslow tells Jean, his wife of 28 years, about his taco troubles. "We were taking pictures inside the Taco Bell," he explains. "Which seemed to upset Taco Bell to no end. They did not want us to shoot inside Taco Bell lest we reveal secrets."

Of course, Winslow's only joking about revealing the fast-food joint's secrets, but ironically, he has done just that with *Kings of Cool*, his just-released prequel to his *New York Times*-best-selling 2010 book, *Savages*, the film version of which was released on July 6, directed by Oliver Stone and starring Benicio Del Toro, Salma Hayek and John Travolta. It concerns fictional Laguna Beach pot dealers Ben and Chon and their mutual love-interest, O, a love triangle that suffers coitus interruptus at the hands of the Mexican cartels.

Kings of Cool tells how the three fell into the drug business in the first place, how they're really just following the paths laid out for them by their parents, who turn out to be members of a secretive drug ring called the "Association." The story bounces back and forth between Laguna Beach in the mid-2000s and the late 1960s and profiles, among other characters, surfing weed dealer Doc Holliday, nicknamed Taco Jesus, who gives out free tacos at the same Taco Bell where Winslow has just been hassled, one of the oldest remaining in the chain.

In fact, that Taco Bell used to be the epicenter of Orange County's drug scene. As I revealed in my 2010 book, *Orange Sunshine*, the restaurant was just a block away from Mystic Arts World, a famous head-shop, art gallery and countercultural market run by the Brotherhood of Eternal Love, which inspired Winslow's "Association," a

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

WINSLOW (LEFT) HELPED TO SCOUT LAGUNA LOCATIONS FOR THE FILM VERSION OF *SAVAGES* (RIGHT)

JOHN GILHOOLEY

PHOTO BY FRANCOIS DUHAMEL, COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

KING OF COOL » FROM PAGE 13

secretive group of hippies that smuggled hashish from Afghanistan in Volkswagen buses to fund an international LSD-distribution network.

While the reaction to both *Savages* and *Kings of Cool* has been overwhelmingly positive—both books won rave reviews by Janet Maslin of *The New York Times*, who called the former "lean, mean, piercingly funny" and the new release "too damn good to be polarizing"—here in Orange County, not everyone has been enthusiastic about his portrayal of Laguna's shady past, even though he uses the prism of fiction. In October 2010, Winslow was speaking at the 11th annual Men of Mystery event in Irvine when the owner of a now-shuttered Laguna Beach bookstore buttonholed him. "I want you to know that I won't be recommending your book to people," he huffed.

Winslow was too polite to respond. He's used to dealing with critics, as well as meeting people who think they somehow inspired one or another of his various characters. In the acknowledgments for *Kings of Cool*, Winslow does thank certain friends for sharing their stories, a debt he says that can best be repaid by not mentioning their names. "Guys I hang out with, do martial arts with and surf with were telling me stories," he tells me. "I don't think you can hang around here very long without that history, that culture, coming into your awareness."

Winslow points at the ocean. "It's like a wave," he elaborates. "Look out there. There's always something on the surface that you can see. But there's always also something under the surface that's causing what you see on the surface, that view and the people who inhabit it, the surf world and—let's face it—the dope world.

"There is a very cool aspect to it," Winslow continues. "The whole country has always thought that California was cool. The migration went west, the culture flushes back east, so in 1964, you've got kids singing 'Surfin' Safari' in Kansas, and it's cool. It's definitely cool."

BEFORE HE MIGRATED west and flushed California's culture back east and beyond, Winslow grew up in Rhode Island and New Orleans, surrounded by legends. His father served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and saw action at Guadalcanal, and Winslow remembers late nights eavesdropping, entranced by his dad's war stories. His neighbors included Mafia-tied families, which explains why he has never been shy about writing about organized crime. "They were there," he says matter-of-factly. "And I knew them."

Although he can't recall a time when he didn't want to be a writer, Winslow didn't publish his first book until relatively late in life, after he'd already sampled several other careers: a theater manager in New York, a safari guide in Kenya and a private investigator. His cases typically involved arson and fraud but also the occasional murder or child abuse, and they often took him to California.

Winslow still remembers the first time he came to Laguna Beach. It was 1990, and he had the day off from work, so he drove from his Costa Mesa hotel down to Pacific Coast Highway, and then headed south from Corona del Mar, hoping to arrive at some friends' house in coastal San Diego County in time for dinner. When he reached Crystal Cove, Winslow pulled over. "Holy God," he thought to himself. "I've never seen anything like this."

He ate lunch at a restaurant that is now Laguna Cliffs Inn; he dined on peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches served by unreconstructed hippie waitresses. Then he drove to Dana Point, bought a bottle of wine at a liquor store near the marina, and called his wife, who was at home in Connecticut. "Babe, you've got to come out here," he begged.

For the next three years, he and Jean lived out of hotels, their bills expensed by the law firms who were paying Winslow's investigator salary. Jean birthed a son, who is now in college and volunteering for the Obama campaign, and they eventually bought a condo in Dana Point before moving to a ranch near Julian, a rural town in northern San Diego County. Somehow, Winslow also found time to write several mystery books, the first of which, 1991's *A Cool Breeze On the Underground*, won a prestigious Edgar Award. But none of them would pay the bills.

Everything changed with *The Death and Life of Bobby Z*, published by Knopf in 1997, which led to a three-book deal that allowed him to become a full-time writer. Winslow wrote the book on the train between San Juan Capistrano and downtown LA's Union Station, during his commute to and from his day job. Each leg of the journey took just more than an hour, and Winslow wrote one chapter per trip, two per day. "When I'd hear the conductor say, 'Union Station, 10 minutes,' whatever was happening in that chapter, I'd wrap it up," he recalls. "It worked miracles."

Bobby Z was also Winslow's first book to probe Laguna Beach's notorious past as a drug-dealing mecca. The namesake character is an almost mythical marijuana smuggler who has presumably died in Thailand but whose legend lives on, particularly in the hallucinations of a character nicknamed One Way, a homeless casualty of the acid-drenched 1960s. One Way wanders up and down the coast heralding Bobby's imminent arrival by sailboat with an epic haul of weed.

Although Winslow's characters are fictional, much of what they experience is real, even the most spectacularly violent episodes Winslow offers up in books such as 2005's *Power of the Dog*, his drug-war masterpiece chronicling the rise of the Mexican cartels, or, for that matter, *Kings of Cool*, which features a cop-turned-cartel-assassin who writes warnings for his opponents in the entrails of his victims. "My editor would say, 'Oh, that's over the top,'" Winslow recalls. "And I'd say, 'Oh, I absolutely agree, but it's what happened."

Some of the anecdotes in *Kings of Cool*—characters who hand out free tacos to runaway kids, teenagers sleeping in caves, laundering cash and selling joints to support their newfound family—are familiar from *Orange Sunshine*, which Winslow kindly cites in his book's acknowledgments, along with *The Brotherhood of Eternal Love*, published in the 1980s by British journalists Stewart Tendler and David May.

But some of the most compelling material in his book, Winslow says, comes straight from just hanging out and meeting interesting people. "It's funny," he muses, pointing downhill at Laguna's Main Beach, which is where the first day of filming took place for *Savages*. "I've taken location scouts around here, and they flip because it's right out of the book—guys playing volleyball and girls watching them, or girls playing volleyball and guys watching."

On previous books, Winslow adds, he grew tired of editors telling him that real people didn't talk like his characters. "You get on an airplane, you fly to San Diego or John Wayne Airport, and if I can't put you in front of these people in half an hour, you win the argument," Winslow says. "Of course they never take you up on it because you can't get them across the Hudson."

One of the most harrowing passages in *Kings of Cool*, Winslow claims, comes straight from the mouth of one of his friends who grew up in Laguna in the 1970s. The son of a pot dealer, he recalled how some of his father's "friends" picked him up one day and drove him out to the desert, where they held him hostage at a safe house. As it turned out, the friend's dad owed the men a large quantity of cash. He spent a weekend drinking beer with his captors and flipping through porno magazines until his dad came up with the cash. "That happened up right there," Winslow says, nodding at the hillsides above Laguna Canyon.

FUCK YOU.

Those two words comprise the first chapter of *Savages*.

Winslow was frustrated at the fact that despite having written a dozen best-selling books—all but one of which has been optioned for screen—only *Bobby Z* had been made into a movie. It starred Laurence Fishburne, Olivia Wilde and David Carradine and went straight to video. "I was really pissed off at the pub-

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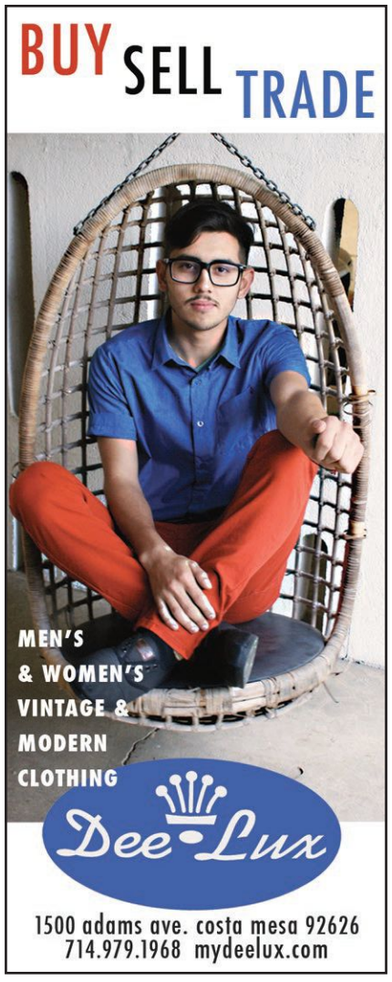

KING OF COOL » FROM PAGE 14

lishing world," explains Winslow. "I sat down at my typewriter and typed, 'Fuck you.'" Winslow imagined somebody at a bookstore picking up the book and cracking it open to the first page. "Either they are going to laugh and buy the book or get really pissed off and put it back on the shelf."

Winslow kept writing. "All of a sudden—I don't have an answer for this—I'm writing from the point of view of a twentysomething-year-old woman and her boyfriends in the drug trade," he recalls. The woman, a blond beach girl named Ophelia, or O, is the shared love interest of Ben, a UC Berkeley-schooled botanist and creator of a super-powerful marijuana strain, and his childhood friend Chon, a Navy SEAL and veteran of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Ben is the brain of the operation, Chon the muscle.

After spending five years researching the horrific world of the Mexican cartels for *Power of the Dog*, Winslow says, he never planned to write about them again. But by the end of Chapter Two, he already knew they'd play a key role in Ben, Chon and O's story. Whereas *Dog* deals with mayhem south of the border, *Savages* depicts its inevitable arrival in *el Norte*. "The cartels are here," Winslow says. "They're in every major American city, taking over rural America. It's a mad, mad world, and it's gotten so much worse."

(Yes, they're here in OC. Last month, the federal government busted what they say was a quarterhorse-racing empire in the United States that served as a front for the notorious Zetas drug cartel. Among its main playgrounds? The Los Alamitos Race Course.)

As the book begins, O is playing with Ben's laptop when an anonymous sender delivers a video clip via Skype. When Ben clicks on the link, he's treated to chillingly dispassionate video footage of several decapitated heads, all lined up neatly.

While the scene is imaginary, the video isn't, according to Winslow. "I have been sent the exact video that appears in the book," he says.

The faces are Mexican; the heads belong to drug dealers who refused to work for the Baja cartel, which, in the fictional context of *Savages*, is headed by the ruthless Elena, played by Salma Hayek in the film. The message: Sell your weed exclusively to us, or we chop off your heads. Ben and Chon opt for a third option, which you'll have to either buy the book or watch the movie to learn, but suffice it to say it involves a bloody confrontation with Elena's ruthless hitman, Lado, played by Benicio Del Toro.

Winslow wasn't sure where he was going with the plot at first, just that he wanted to have a strong female character as the narrative anchor to the story. "A young woman character who was entirely in charge of her sexuality, unashamedly, unabashedly, and who talks about it," Winslow explains. More generally, he also wanted to capture the disembodied way people experience reality in contemporary culture. "The threat literally starts as severed heads, but the characters are talking to each other in Skype, which is digitally severed heads, just heads floating in space."

Without stopping, Winslow typed up the first 14 pages of *Savages*. It was unlike anything he'd written before. His first few books had been told in the traditional method, in the third-person, past-tense voice from the point of view of an omniscient narrator. He'd mixed things up in *Bobby Z* a bit, as well as the novels that followed it, by introducing some verbal jujitsu into the mix, so that Winslow isn't just telling a story about the characters on the page, but also speaking directly to the reader.

"All of a sudden, I'm writing in present tense, with tight points of view, flipping points of view," Winslow recalls. "I mean *Savages* flips points of view inside paragraphs, so does *Kings* [*of Cool*]. And there's this rule—thou shalt not switch points of view inside a chapter. I don't do it inside a chapter; I do it inside a syllable if I think it's the right thing to do."

As a best-selling author with his own established style, Winslow knew his flouting of literary convention was risky. "It's deliberate," he says. "I always have the reader in mind. I want them to get a certain kind of reaction, a certain kind of kick. It drives copy editors insane. I say, 'Take away their shoelaces and their belts before you assign this book because I'm just going to be writing, 'Stet,'" he jokes, referring to the term authors often write in the margin of copy-edited manuscripts, which roughly translates as, "Don't you dare fucking change this word."

After finishing those first 14 pages, Winslow immediately emailed the proto-*Savages* to his friend Shane Salerno, the A-list Hollywood screenwriter who penned *Armageddon* and the *Shaft* remake, among others. The two had previously collaborated on a TV series called *UC: Undercover*, which was canceled after one season in 2001. "This is either really good or it's horrible," Winslow wrote. "Either I'm nuts or I'm on to something."

Salerno still remembers his first glimpse of Winslow's new novel. "It was explosive," he says.

About a month earlier, Salerno and Winslow had talked about the latter's frustration with writing books that, while huge successes in the publishing world—achieving best-seller status in the U.S., Europe and Latin America—never seemed to be appreciated by Hollywood. "Listen," Salerno told his friend. "Forget about the rules. Write about whatever you want, and let it rip."

When he read what became the first two chapters of *Savages*, Salerno knew he had a film on his hands. "It just grabbed your throat off the page," he tells me. "I emailed him back: 'Drop everything you're doing, and finish this while you're in this headspace.'"

It was clear to Salerno that Winslow was under the grip of visions or being driven by some hideous passion. "He has never adequately explained to me or anyone else where this voice came from," Salerno says. "I believe he channeled something. I've known him 13 years, and he's always known where things have come from.'

By the time Simon & Schuster published *Savages* in July 2010, Salerno had

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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ON A *SAVAGES* SET IN LAGUNA BEACH

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KING OF COOL » FROM PAGE 16

already arranged for Oliver Stone to direct a movie version of the book. He set up the deal as a testing ground for his recently formed production company, the Story Factory. Salerno knew that, as with Winslow's previous novels, *Savages* could easily be sold to a studio, but he convinced his friend to forgo that process and package the deal.

"That's how we came to Oliver," Salerno says, referring to Stone, who ended up co-writing the *Savages* screenplay with both Salerno and Winslow, which led to a bidding war between Paramount, 20th Century Fox and Universal Studios, which won. "From the time the book came out to the time it got sold was 11 months," Salerno says. "From Universal buying it to shooting was three months. We did it in an incredibly efficient manner."

Salerno arranged for Stone and the film's cast to meet with several DEA agents and former drug traffickers. "We actually spoke with someone who had been kidnapped by the cartels and someone who was a girlfriend of a cartel figure," he says. "I had met some of these people on another project, and they did a really good job of bringing reality to Don's fiction."

Before shooting began, Salerno and Stone accompanied Winslow to do some location scouting in Laguna Beach, checking out specific spots from the book such as Main Beach and Reef Point. They met the director at the Montage resort somewhat late in the day, and being that it was winter, the sun was already getting low in the sky as Salerno, who was driving, steered the team along Coast Highway.

"It was so funny," Winslow recalls. "The sun is going down, and Oliver is like, 'Shane! You gotta go faster—we got so much to cover!' So Shane would speed up, and I'd say, 'Over there is the beach where...' and Oliver would say 'Shane! Jesus Christ! Slow down! We're trying to see stuff here!'" After this happened three or four times, Salerno finally pulled over, stopped the car and turned around in his seat, according to Winslow. "Oliver," he said quietly. "I can go faster. Or I can slow down. I can't do both. Which is it?"

Working with Stone on the screenplay meant allowing the book's focus to filter through the director's idiosyncratic lens, but Winslow is happy with the results. "It's a good movie with some terrific performances," he says. But despite working with one of Hollywood's top screenwriters and most celebrated film directors, Winslow never allowed himself to believe the movie would actually be made until the first day of shooting. "I'm that way about life itself," he remarks. "It's maybe not the best thing about me, but I never really believe in anything until after it has happened."

He certainly never stopped working. In a 15-month period, Winslow not only wrote *Savages*, but also completed two screenplays and three other books, including a draft of an unpublished novel whose topic Winslow prefers not to discuss. He also wrote 2009's *The Gentlemen's Hour*, about surfers in San Diego, and *Satori*, published in 2011, a prequel to Trevanian's best-selling 1979 martial-arts novel *Shibumi*. Thanks to Salerno's Story Factory, the latter project is already being developed as a film starring Leonardo DiCaprio.

Despite his hectic schedule—when I met him for tacos in Laguna Beach, Winslow had already been back and forth to New York twice within the week and was about to fly east again—he still adheres to a strict writing schedule. He wakes at 5 a.m. every day, works on one book for several hours, then hikes in the hills for 5 or 6 miles before coming home to work on another book for several more hours.

On the day I interviewed him, he'd already put in half a day's writing work and wasn't done yet. "You've got to find the hours somewhere," he says, adding that he has already started on three more books.

"I'm just really excited about the future," he says. "I've spent the past three years with Ben, Chon and O. It's been fun, but I'm looking forward to doing other things."

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OC WEEKLY
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calendar

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SUNDAY
WATCH SOPHIA LOREN SEDUCE A PRIEST

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MONDAY
FINGERPRINTS KEEPS THE SHOWS ROLLING IN

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TUESDAY
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WEDNESDAY
PEOPLE LOVE A GOOD GORING

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THURSDAY
ADD SOME SHAKESPEARE TO YOUR LIFE

friday>
EXCUSE ME, BUT I ORDERED A LARGE

CHRISTOPHER VICTORIO

fri/07/13

[FESTIVAL]

Eat Up!
OC FAIR

Good luck trying to travel the 405 anywhere near Costa Mesa this week. Starting Friday, the OC Fair is back with all the concerts, rides (gotta love the giant Ferris wheel), games, knick-knack shopping and fried abominations you can handle. New this year is deep-fried cereal. But fear not, these crispy standards are back: fried Krispy Kreme chicken sandwiches, fried Twinkies, fried frog's legs. If you haven't tried the fried butter yet, split it with a friend or two. The first bite is heaven, but any more than that and you can immediately feel your arteries clogging. Also new this year is the camel dairy, where fair-goers can watch daily camel-milking demonstrations—maybe do that after you eat, though.

OC Fair at 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500; www.ocfair.com. Open Wed.-Fri., noon-midnight; Sat.-Sun., 10 a.m.-midnight. Through Aug. 12. $6-$11. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

Make It Rain
Fat Joe

With some amateur rappers, you can count on a few clichés when you see them live: a not-so-subtle line about allegedly being a gangbanger, terrible metaphors referencing either sex or drugs (anything with candy) and mannerisms copying Tupac or Eminem. It's hard to find original MCs anymore. But tonight, come see a rapper who is a staple in the discussion of hip-hop's history. Fat Joe, CEO of the Terror Squad, heads to Santa Ana to spit fire from his hits and new tracks. So "Lean Back" and think about how Fat Joe has cemented his name into our cultural knowledge. He collaborated with the late and great Big Punisher, he's been nominated for two Grammies, and he sells out arenas—even in Russia. Don't miss this concert if you want to hear an East Coast rapper tear the roof off a building on the West Coast.

Fat Joe at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. $20. —JOE LAPIN

sat/07/14

[THEATER]

Human Nature
HUNTER GATHERERS

Despite impressive advances in technology, can man say he's outpaced his primal self? Or are such notions a mere illusion? The Garage Theatre in Long Beach is celebrating its 50th production—come witness the company's commitment to independent art and enjoy its production of *Hunter Gatherers*. Directed by Matt Anderson, the story follows two couples, 30-somethings who've known each other since high school, as they sit down for dinner. Faced with a love quadrangle, some characters retreat to their animal selves. It promises to bring the laughs and, by the sound of it, possible poo flinging.

Hunter Gatherers at the Garage Theatre, 251 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, (562) 433-8337; www.thegaragetheatre.org. 8 p.m. Through July 27. $15-$20. —BRANDON FERGUSON

[CONCERT]

Man In Black
Jack Grisham

Jack Grisham is the renaissance man from hell. Did Orson Welles ever surf? Or bust heads before and/or during a T.S.O.L. show? Grisham's punk credentials were established forever on the first few seconds of the original T.S.O.L. EP and stories about the man—and his capacity for chaos—have made him a local legend. (Something about a parking berm . . . used for something very unlike parking?) But publication of his memoir/novel *An American Demon* last year proved he could deliver more than just his own particular kind of crowd control; it also put Grisham's take on those stories into print and punk-noir history both. Tonight, he leads a band mixing T.S.O.L. songs with selections from his post-T.S.O.L. group the Joykiller. And he'll probably be generating a chapter for his next book, too.

Jack Grisham's Lost Soul, the Junk, Red Devil Squadron and Piccolo Pete at the Tiki Bar, 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, (714) 270-6262; www.tikibaroc.com. 8 p.m. $10. 21+. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

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sun/07/15

[FESTIVAL]

Boss, Barbecue, Beer!

Dana Point Summer Concert

You wanna channel a rock god? Sure helps if you not only sound like the guy, but also sorta look like him and play the hell out of the same mutant Fender Telecaster, which you just happened to build yourself. Bonus points if you're from the same town, Freehold, New Jersey. Meet Irvine's Josh Tanner, leader of Springsteen: The Premier Tribute to the Boss, featuring Clarence Clemons and Little Steven sound-alikes. Also tearing up the stage are local favorites the Dave Silver Band with an "eclectic '60s to '90s, Beatles, Stones and Santana" blast from the past. A barbecue and beer garden benefit Camp Pendleton's Afghanistan war vets, the 5th Marine Regiment. Go, close your eyes, and you'll be seeing E Street and Abbey Road.

Dana Point Summer Concert at Sea Terrace Park, Pacific Coast Highway and Niguel Road, Dana Point, (949) 248-3530; www.danapoint.org. 3 p.m. Free. —JACK GRIMSHAW

[FILM]

Forbidden Fruit

THE PRIEST'S WIFE

Put together a married boyfriend, a suicidal young woman and a priest attempting to honor his vow of celibacy, and you have the quirky 1971 romantic comedy, *The Priest's Wife*. After finding out about her boyfriend's double life, Valeria Billi (played by Sophia Loren) leaves just enough time to call a help line during a suicide attempt. She awakes in a hospital to find herself both alive and well—and meets the priest who took her call. Instantly, she's intrigued and begins trying to date him. Of course, it's more complicated than that, but eventually, he falls for her charm . . . until their relationship hits one major roadblock: his holy vow of celibacy. *The Priest's Wife* is shown as part of the Italian Cultural Arts Council's monthly event, Cinema Italiano, to promote Italian art and culture in the community.

Cinema Italiano: *The Priest's Wife* at Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600; www.bowers.org. 1:30 p.m. $10. —JESSICA FORD

mon/07/16

[CONCERT]

High Five

Milo Greene

Milo Greene is not a person; it's Robbie Arnett, Graham Fink, Andrew Heringer, Curtis Marrero and Marlana Sheetz. But the Los Angeles-based indie-folkers blend their collective voices seamlessly to create the ethereal sounds emanating from their self-titled album, scheduled for release on Tuesday. With their recent television debut on *Late Night With David Letterman* and a sold-out headlining set at the Troubadour, the 2-year-old band are gathering a swarm of followers. Join the buzz at Fingerprints.

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Milo Greene at Fingerprints, 420 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 433-4996; www.fingerprintsmusic.com. 8 p.m. Free with RSVP. —AMANDA PARSONS

tue/07/17

[CLUB]

Spin Me Right 'Round

OC's Ultimate DJ Competition

Nearly 50 hopefuls submitted themselves to the critical judging of the White Rabbit Group, the entertainment-and-event company behind OC's Ultimate DJ Competition, and now the top dozen battle it out at Detroit Bar in weekly installments. Showcasing choice selections of EDM (house, electro, bootlegs and mash-ups), this week's contest features Aaron Marcus vs. Taylor Jaymin and Ruben Arellanes vs. Keef Koded (with an opening set by DJ MGA). The top four DJs will compete on July 31, and the final two spin a death match in the Aug.7 title bout. So come discover a new talent, vote for an old favorite, and drink, dance and judge—and see who gets crowned Mix Master of Orange County.

OC's Ultimate DJ Competition at Detroit Bar, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 642-0600; www.detroitbar.com. 8 p.m. $5. 21+. —ERIN DEWITT

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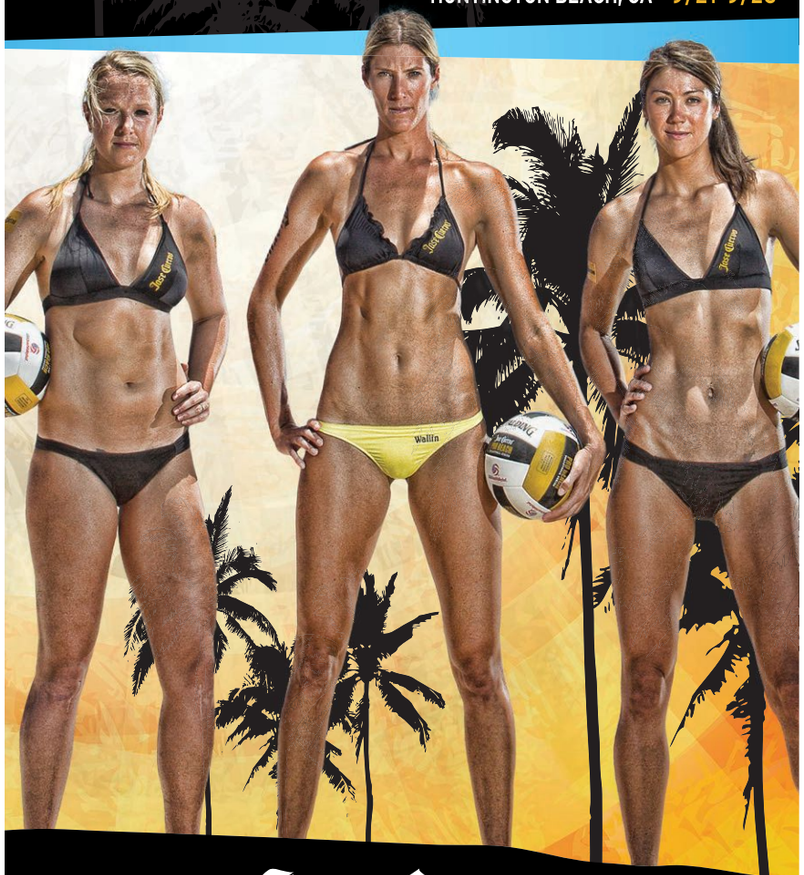

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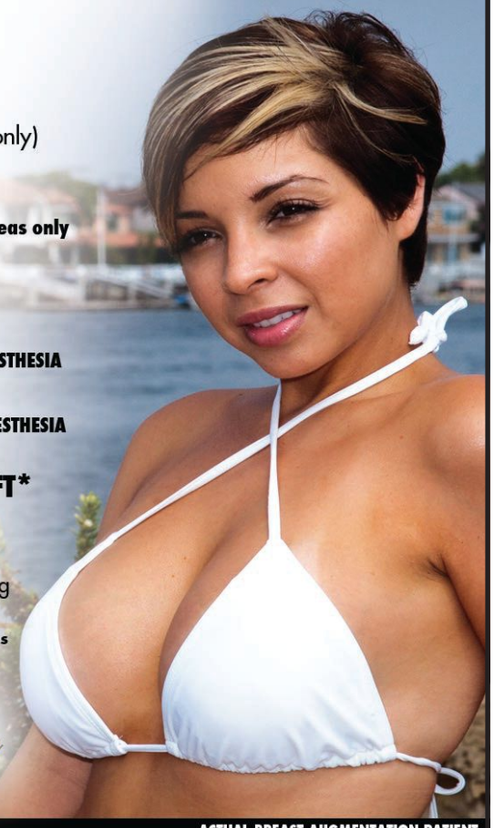

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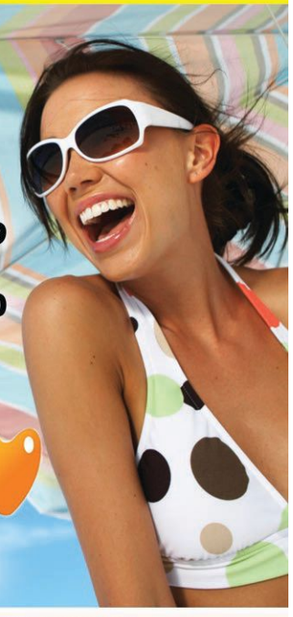

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wed/07/18

[FILM]

Sound On Screen

Shut Up and Play the Hits

A movie about one night that's only coming out for one night? *Shut Up and Play the Hits* documents the last show ever by James Murphy and his band LCD Soundsystem, whose music didn't so much define a generation as mirror it. Retro synths? Loft disco beats? Bottomless record collections and hearts of gold? Mr. Narrator, this was Bob Dylan to a lot of people, and when Murphy and LCD flipped the off switch last year, they made sure the cameras were there to show just how happy the ending was. Few people have seen this so-far-festival-only film, but if it's anything like Murphy himself, it'll be sweet, thoughtful, self-effacing and bristling with hits, yes—but with a couple of deep cuts, too.

LCD Soundsystem: *Shut Up and Play the Hits* at the Long Beach Art Theatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435; www.arttheatrelongbeach.com. 9 p.m. $11. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

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[SPORTS]

Man vs. Beast

EXTREME RODEO

There's nothing quite like the thrill of possible injury to draw crowds. But regular bull riding, with cowboys holding on for dear life while midgets wrangle golden retrievers, doesn't seem to have the same panache it once did. Enter extreme rodeo—there are rings of fire to jump through, backward bull riding and wild animals on the loose in the ring. Watch as brave riders narrowly miss a sharp horn to the kidney. Exciting stuff, but what happens when this kind of endangerment is deemed mundane? See you at the Hunger Games at the OC Fair in 2032.

Extreme Rodeo at the OC Fair and Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500; www.ocfair.com. 8 p.m. $12.50 (includes fair admission). —ERIN DEWITT

thu/07/19

[CONCERT]

Strung Up

Muck Roots: Ukulele Festival

Ah, the mighty ukulele! Hawaii's tiny four-stringed instrument spits out such dainty, whimsical notes. Great uke pioneers such as Ernest Kaai and today's Jake Shimabukuro wield that little thing as well as any guitar virtuoso. And though the hipster ukulele fad may now be fading, true uke lovers remain. Thanks in part to a grant from the James Irvine Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Muckenthaler hosts a ukulele festival tonight featuring Captain Jeff and His Musical Chumbuckets, Janet Klein and Her Parlor Boys, Left Over Cuties, and a new generation of players from La Habra High School's own ukulele band.

Muck Roots: Ukulele Festival at the Muckenthaler Cultural Center, 1201 W. Malvern Ave., Fullerton, (714) 738-6595; www.themuckstore.com. 5 p.m. $10-$20. —ERIN DEWITT

[THEATER]

Hurlyburly

MACBETH

For some, *The Tragedy of Macbeth* is his downfall due to hunger for power, corruption, murder and wishy-washy masculinity; for others, the tragedy is having to sit through it all. Still, this most famous of Shakespearean plays is essential to every theater's summer season and must be experienced at least once by those whose closest relationship to a Mac is usually nuggets. Filled with incredibly famous lines such as "Double, double, toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble" (appropriated by Harry Potter) and "Out, damned spot! Out I say!" (appropriated by anyone whose wet dog busts into the living room), *Macbeth* has icky gore, dreadful deceit, spooky supernatural occurrences and crusty old witches galore. Why wait for Halloween? Get your curse on now!

Macbeth at Long Beach Playhouse, 5021 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 494-1014; www.lbplayhouse.org. 8 p.m. Through Aug. 18. Pay what you can; regular performances, $14-$27. —STACY DAVIES

The Pixar of OC Italian

Alessandro Pirozzi has his fourth smash in a row with Mare Culinary Lounge

BY EDWIN GOEI

LP HASTINGS

BELLA BEEF

I knew I was in for a good meal at Mare Culinary Lounge in Laguna Beach, but I didn't expect to find one of the best dishes I've ever had. The venison filet mignon, two cubes the size of a baseball sitting on opposite sides of an oblong plate, was red meat epitomized: the outside burnished close to char, the inside a sinew-free crimson soft enough to be cut into by the dullest spatula. And then there was the way it was served: each piece perched atop a warmed, halved peach in which a sweet/tart port wine reduction pooled into the wells left by the pits. Who knew that peaches are to deer meat as apples are to pork chops? Or that amarena cherries, which Italians preserve with sugar for topping ice cream, work even better in a game meat-centered main course? In the middle of the plate, cupped in a rigid basket made from deep-fried pasta sheets, were the golden, home-style potatoes I remember fondly from Alessandro Pirozzi's other Laguna Beach restaurant, Alessá. These home fries, I admit, made it even easier for me to use the words "best ever." I've always been a sucker for crispy, buttery, fried potatoes, and these were pretty damn close to perfect.

Mare is the fourth restaurant by Pirozzi, the man this rag has singled out in issues past as OC's most-admired Italian restaurateur. Not that he needs our approval: He has already proven himself a hit-maker with his trilogy of Alessás in Newport, Huntington and Laguna beaches, the latest of which opened to overflow crowds about two years ago. But with Mare, you get the sense Pirozzi is operating with the confidence of someone who knows he has zoomed past the usual sophomore slump without even blinking. He provides barely a clue that Mare is his restaurant or that it's in any way affiliated with the Alessás. It doesn't need it; it stands on its own.

The site was formerly Blue Laguna, a clubby lounge (as is Mare) placed anachronistically inside a quaint Holiday Inn with wrought-iron balconies reminiscent of New Orleans Square. While Pirozzi's other restaurants are fit for families, Mare is intimate and sexy. The cold blue lights and shiny metal make it resemble a futuristic set from a scene in *Blade Runner*. A looped movie of bathing elephants projected on one wall is purposely beguiling. There are other features that indicate the restaurant also wants to be trendy, but for now, as Mare is slowly being discovered, reservations are a snap to secure, and parking is even easier (you're allowed to use the hotel's lot).

For those who come to enjoy Mare as a lounge and bar, it already has fried calamari that beats any offered on Pacific Coast Highway. The lighter-than-air batter covering the tender squid rings, Castelveltrano olives and house-pickled jalapeños taste rich. From there, move to the tissue-thin octopus carpaccio, which melt on the tongue as though they are snowflakes, while the sprinkled, black, Sicilian lava salt crunches between the teeth. There are direct imports from the Alessás, including the indispensable, incredible butternut-squash ravioli with brown butter and fried sage; here, they are cut into heart shapes and called cuori. But even an out-of-place appetizer called "Tacos Mai Way," which employs the fluffy steamed Chinese bun all Momofuku aspirants tend to use, is well-done. Instead of pork belly, Pirozzi stuffs his "tacos" with braised oxtail, sweet onions, carrots and a homemade saba. The oxtail is also seen tangled up between the pappardelle, tape-wide, green-tinted noodles that taste as though they were just squeezed out from a pasta press. The lasagnas use the same pasta, but cut wider and laid down with béchamel for a balanced dish layered with a slow-cooked meat sauce. I expected Pirozzi to make a good lasagna, but I didn't expect it to be just as light as his salmon and sea bass, both seared on a hot pan to a proper crust and moist flesh.

All that I saw and tasted confirm that Mare will be the fourth hit in a row for Pirozzi. It does, however, require me to revise an earlier write-up. In a previous review, I likened the chef to James Cameron, another auteur who hasn't yet had a flop. But at his current level of output—the first Alessá opened in 2008, the second in 2009, the third the year after that, and now Mare—Pirozzi is starting to look more like Pixar, a blockbuster-per-year juggernaut.

MARE CULINARY LOUNGE
696 S. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 715-9581; www.mareculinarylounge.com. Open Mon.-Wed., 7 a.m.-midnight; Thurs.-Sun., 7 a.m.-2 a.m. Dinner for two, $40-$70, food only. Full bar.

HOLE IN THE WALL
» GUSTAVO ARELLANO

The Lou Gehrig of Thai Cooking

MADEE THAI KITCHEN
401 E. 17th St., Ste. C, Costa Mesa, (949) 631-2731.

Of all the categories of ethnic restaurants, Thai eateries tend to be the most beautifully decorated: Every one seems to host paintings of pagodas, statues of various incarnations of Buddha, pictures of beautiful Thai women, and at least one photo of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, a touch that seems as mandatory to Thai restaurants as a portrait of the Virgin of Guadalupe is to Mexican ones.

That's why I was a bit perturbed on my initial visit to MaDee Thai Kitchen, in that part of Costa Mesa that's about to turn into Newport Beach. There's a replica of the Great Buddha of Thailand . . . and that's it. The white-and-crimson walls are bereft of any paintings; the menu is tacked onto a marquee and devoid of any dish descriptions. There are only a couple of tables and chairs, and all food comes served on plastic plates by a man and wife dressed as though they're cafeteria workers at Estancia High School. Its no-frills style extends down to the entrées, which don't stray far from the pad Thai/fried rice/curry/tom yum quadrant that dominates that country's eating in Orange County. In a county with many Thai restaurants but few great ones, MaDee is the epitome of a restaurant that's as great a place can be without being a hell of a restaurant. This isn't an insult: All the dishes here please better than their local competition—the curries, in particular, exhibit the nuances that distinguish Thai curry from its Southeast Asian competition. But this is a place definitely for the locals, for people who want the tried-and-true at their absolute height—the Lou Gehrig of Thai restaurants, as opposed to the Babe Ruth, which makes the décor even that much more telling.

There are a couple of regional specialties that hint at MaDee's ultimate worth. The moo ping is similar to a chicken satay except better, sweeter; kao soi is a gorgeous soup composed of crunchy egg noodles submerged in yellow curry, then spiked with raw onions, chilies and other condiments, transforming the bowl from a hearty meal into something electric. A dish called "pork jerky with sticky rice" is more well-cooked pork with white rice, but it's spectacular and features a fish sauce that's the liquid equivalent of lightning. MaDee will probably always skew toward the safe given the demographics of its location, and that's fine: Sometimes all an eater wants is a heap of pad Thai, sweet and sticky, and MaDee will satisfy that yen like a honey in a bikini on Balboa come sunset.

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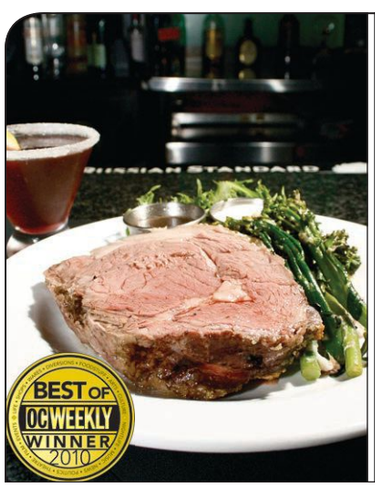

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LP HASTINGS
THE WU-TAI CLAN

No Wafflin' Here

George Wu and Lawrence Tai of Waffles de Liege

Friends either complement one another or tend to act as though they're twins. For the guys of luxe *lonchera* Waffles de Liege, it's somewhere in the middle.

Your earliest food memory:
George Wu: The earliest would probably be when I got a huge fish bone stuck in my throat while eating at a Chinese restaurant. The waitress had to remove it with a pair of nail clippers. To this day, I am still paranoid when I eat boney fish. For my earliest *pleasant* memory, it would have to be making scrambled eggs at sleepovers with childhood friends in the neighborhood. It was the first time I used paprika and probably the first time I prepared food.
Lawrence Tai: I don't have the best memory, but I think it would have to be dried, shredded squid snack. I was very young and on a flight to Taiwan with my family when my mom passed me a strange bag filled with the jerky-ish substance. I was scared at first, but after I got a taste, it was delightful.
Favorite meal growing up:
Wu: Rice porridge with pickled cucumbers, fermented egg in soy sauce, and rou song. It was very light but still flavorful and filling. I ate this often with my family.
Tai: Rice porridge also! But with yu song [shredded preserved fish].
Your best recent food find:
Wu: You know, working with gourmet-food trucks, I have the wonderful opportunity to eat delicious, creative food all the time. I recently had a duck confit dish from OC's very own Lime Truck that was very memorable. Good work, fellas.
Tai: Interestingly enough, it would have to be Jason Quinn's Playground. I love the concept and everything he does there. Even now, I'm still thinking about the pan-roasted wild mushrooms with slow egg.
How did you customize your truck? Was there any equipment/layout you wanted that you couldn't find on existing trucks?
Both: Our truck is completely custom. We built the kitchen out from the back of an empty delivery truck. Our setup had very specific power and equipment requirements that a standard catering truck could not provide. We also had no use for a grill, steam table or fryer.
What's so special about Belgian Pearl Sugar?
Both: It's the heart and soul of a Liege waffle. It "explodes" when cooked, leaving this amazing combination of warm, chewy dough and sugar caramelization. And when you take your first bite, you get some of that remaining sugar in your mouth—it's a wonderful treat.
You purposely divide your time between both LA and OC. Why not stay in just one county?
Both: Liege waffles are the underdogs when it comes to the Belgian waffle world. We started the truck because we wanted to share Liege waffles with all of Southern California, not just a specific area. With a dual-permitted truck, it gave us the freedom to go where we were requested without having to worry about setting up a second truck for a specific county.
Where was your most recent meal?
Wu: Cook's Torta in LA. I had the torta ahogada, a side of potato salad and a slice of the house carrot cake. Absolutely delicious. The strawberry-guava drink is also very refreshing.
Tai: I was just at Olive Pit Mediterranean Grill in Brea. I had the flat-iron steak, Rocka salad, roasted mushrooms and some tzatziki, stolen from my girlfriend's plate.
Lawrence, how does sustainability factor into Waffles de Liege?
Tai: Whenever possible, we try our best to buy local, such as our choice ice-cream purveyor, Fosselman's; green, such as our compostible to-go boxes, plates and ice cream cups; and made in the U.S., from our fridges down to our tip jar.
How do you like your waffle?
Wu: My go-to combo is speculoos, whipped cream and chocolate syrup.
Tai: Au naturale, but sometimes with ice cream and syrup!
Weirdest customer request:
Wu: One lady asked us to make an ice-cream waffle sandwich, which we did. We actually added it to our menu. We eventually took it down because it was confusing to those customers expecting the image on our truck.
Tai: Some customers still ask for bean-and-cheese burritos. . . . We don't do those.

Follow Waffles de Liege on Twitter at @wafflesdeliege.

ON THE LINE

» ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

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Craft Pizza

Kale and Mushroom Flatbread at 320 Main

SHUJI SAKAI

EatthisNow
»SHUJI SAKAI

Flatbreads became trendy at some point after gastropubs embedded themselves in the culinary zeitgeist. An old-school pub can proudly serve a cheeseburger and pizza, but a gastropub must raise the stakes with a grass-fed porterhouse burger and flatbread.

Still, many high-concept gastropubs make a sodden, sorry excuse for flatbread crust because they think using pricier ingredients compensates for poor pizza-making technique. That's not the case at 320 Main, the craft-cocktail bar and restaurant in Seal Beach. Here, the ingredients showcase a grilled crust that's perfectly baked. It forms the vital foundation, but you can't hope to call your pizza a flatbread unless you have seriously flavorful, high-quality ingredients. Spanish Manchego and tangy Parmesan add flavor to the gooey mozzarella. Kale and mushroom lend their flavors and absorb the fat from the three-cheese blend and the truffle oil in the background.

There's the option to add a fried egg for $2 to just about anything on 320 Main's menu, and you'll want to take it here. The perfectly cooked sunny-side-up egg with a runny yolk commingles with the rest of the flavorful ingredients to make the richest, most flavorful sauce you'll sop up with your flatbread. It's not pizza-by-the-slice that you fold in half and eat Tony Manero-style as you strut down the street. Once you flood all this gooey goodness on your plate, your flatbread is a crisp, perfectly grilled crust that's a vehicle to absorb all the juices. Yeah, you'll probably use a knife and fork so you don't get egg yolk all over your fingers. But even if you do, other customers will nod knowingly as you both bond over your finger-lickin'-bad manners. *From a July 5 Stick a Fork In It post.*

320 MAIN
320 Main St., Seal Beach, (562) 799-6246; www.320mainsealbeach.com.

DrinkoftheWeek
»EDWIN GOEI

Bistro Champagne Lemonade at Paul Martin's American Bistro

FIZZY!
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The Paul behind Paul Martin's American Bistro is the same as the "P" in P.F. Chang's. He is Paul Fleming, the restaurateur who first struck gold with Fleming's Prime Steakhouse. Instead of mass-marketed Chinese food or steak, the angle for this newest venture is locavore cuisine, but truth is, it still looks like a steakhouse. The newest of three Paul Martin's, the Irvine Spectrum branch has a sprawling room with curvy booths, candlelit yet bare tables, and a bar that seems to glow.

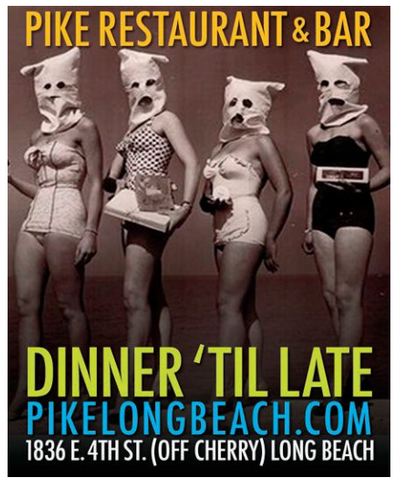
Service here is as genuine and precise as the food. The steak (yes, you should still order the steak) is served as char-burnished slabs with just one side dish, usually a swirl of smooth-as-cream mashed potatoes. Paul Martin's closest peer is Houston's—a corporate eatery whose restraint means a classy, no-nonsense way of operating a restaurant. This is reflected most in Paul Martin's specialty cocktails—exactly seven, priced at $9 each, ranging from a very legitimate mojito that would've pleased even the mojito-loving Ernest Hemingway to a drink actually named after the author that features vanilla rum, a maraschino cherry and ruby red juice.

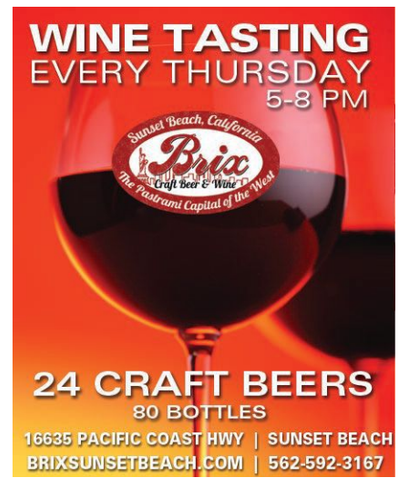
The best drink, though, has to be the Bistro Champagne Lemonade, which seems the only house libation the restaurant takes two lines to describe.

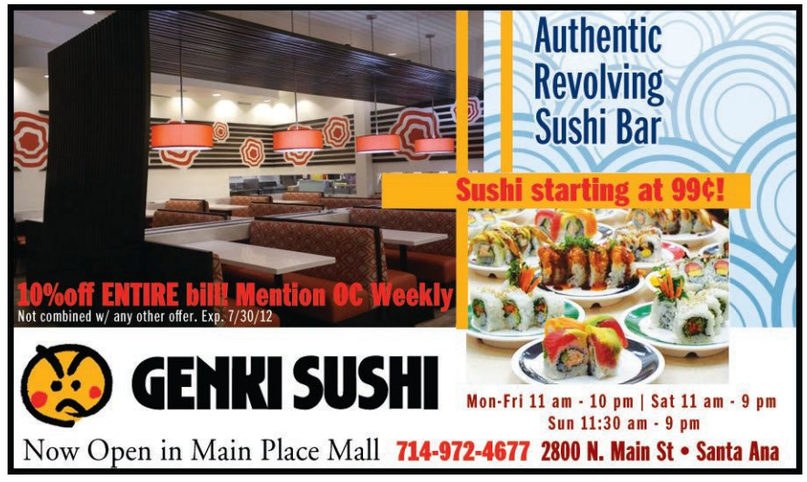
THE DRINK

It starts with a house-infused Meyer lemon vodka, which is mixed with lemon juice and fresh basil, then topped off with a pour of Gloria Ferrer sparkling wine. In the sipping, it tastes and fizzes very much as the other hard lemonades you've had at backyard barbecues, though not as cloyingly sweet. And then there are the refreshing herbal notes of the basil, which makes it a nice chaser to that rich,bloody steak you should've also ordered. *From a July 6 Stick a Fork In It post.*

PAUL MARTIN'S AMERICAN BISTRO
31 Fortune Dr., Irvine, (949) 453-1144; www.paulmartinsamericanbistro.com.







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BLOW ME

High Fantasy

Oliver Stone's drug-trade drama settles for sensation

BY KARINA LONGWORTH

"Welcome to the recession, boys," says John Travolta's DEA-double-agent profiteer in Oliver Stone's *Savages*, based on Don Winslow's novel. It's a movie of its moment, though both its good and bad guys (if there's really even a difference) are unquestionably the 1 percent of their industry—that is, the weed trade. The setting is the 100 miles surrounding the California-Mexico border circa right this minute (a subplot involves Mexican elections, which took place in real life on July 1), with Stone focusing on the human and fiscal politics of California's twin pot economies, one quasi-legal and the other criminal—a split the film suggests can last for only so long.

California dudes Ben and Chon (Aaron Johnson and Taylor Kitsch) are dragged into a turf war with the expansion-minded Mexican cartel run by Salma Hayek's drug-war widow Elena and her brutally amoral deputy Lado (Benicio Del Toro). The Mexicans regularly show their power by creating and disseminating videos documenting torture and beheadings. Eighty miles over the border, in Laguna Beach, Ben and Chon supply their ultra-potent, genetically engineered strains to legal dispensaries but make their real money by illegally shipping out of state. The product and its profits fuel the boys' lifestyle of neo-hippie decadence, embodied by the business partners' enthusiastic bedroom sharing of poor little rich girl turned earth-mother floozy Ophelia (Blake Lively). Both sides consider the other to be "savages"—which we know because they say it aloud multiple times. (Maybe when doing press for his last film, Stone had one too many journalists ask, "But wait—what does *Money Never Sleeps* actually, like, *mean?*")

More than two hours long—and building to two endings, one romantic-tragic and one quasi-ironic and romantic-ludicrous—*Savages* is bloated with plot and exposition, much of which is related via the incessant voiceover of Ophelia, who goes by O (as she tells us . . . via voiceover). "Just 'cause I'm telling you this story doesn't mean I'm alive at the end of it," she says at the beginning of the film, introducing the possibility of narrative innovation that the movie to come doesn't fulfill. Other pearls of wisdom delivered through this device: "He's always trying to fuck the war out of himself. I have orgasms; he has wargasms" and "Dope's supposed to be bad, but in a bad, bad world, it's good." Sometimes paraphrasing Stone himself at his most stoner utopian (see the recent *Hollywood Reporter* interview in which the filmmaker declares, "I believe the grass is God's gift"), O is made quite literally the voice of the movie, a responsibility the character is too wispy to shoulder. Lively is both appropriately spacy and convincingly vulnerable, but as a point of identification, O is too naive and self-absorbed to care about, even when most victimized.

> Hayek and Del Toro, both sporting (apparently) intentionally terrible wigs, give big, scenery-chewing performances and earn our interest and empathy even while committing heinous acts.

The film's micro-time-capsule approach is interesting, but Stone, Winslow and co-writer Shane Salerno's indulgence in both above-the-law fantasy and the only-in-Hollywood notion that love trumps business are more potent than any point they're trying to make about our real world. Of course, the law itself—represented by Travolta's fed who works both sides to serve only himself and whose never-seen wife is said to be using reefer for her cancer pain—is both corrupt and hypocritical. It's more indicative of the film's lack of interest in character that psychological exploration of Chon, a veteran of our Middle Eastern wars who smuggled sweet pot seeds out of Afghanistan and employs his former fellow soldiers as sniper-enforcers back in the States, is limited to O's deduction that "he came back with lots of cash but no soul."

Soul is something *Savages* has in short supply, mostly because Kitsch and Johnson register as blanks onscreen. In contrast, Hayek and Del Toro, both sporting (apparently) intentionally terrible wigs, give big, scenery-chewing performances and earn our interest and empathy even while committing heinous acts. Their knowing camp, particularly in contrast to the dishwater petulance of the trio of white people the movie seems to want us to root for, at least gives us something to laugh with, rather than at.

This review appeared online on July 5.

SAVAGES
was directed by Oliver Stone; written by Shane Salerno, Don Winslow and Stone; and stars Taylor Kitsch, Blake Lively, Aaron Johnson, John Travolta, Uma Thurman, Benicio Del Toro and Salma Hayek. Rated R.

ongoing

THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN Spider-Man's story is some primal-ass teenage wish-fulfillment: nerds beating jocks, astonishing the old people, romancing hot girls, dangling criminals from rooftops, fighting awesome monsters, and for god's sake, people, we're not made of stone, here. *The Amazing Spider-Man,* an inexcusably good reboot-thing from director Marc Webb, celebrates the heartwarming arachno-genetic bar mitzvah in which a boy becomes a spider, and a spider becomes a man. Boy genius Peter Parker, played charmingly by Chia-haired Andrew Garfield, tours the Oscorp lab of Dr. Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans), a kindly, non-mad scientist recklessly tampering with the fundamental forces of nature, as one does. Dr. Connors's facility includes a sealed room full of genetically altered spiders into which Peter sneaks while everyone else is distracted by unlikely Hollywood computer interfaces. Reader, the spider bites him. Credit Sony with making an unconventional choice in Webb, whose great *(500) Days of Summer* was not the obvious debut for the director of a high-profile, big-budget action film. It's all sharp-of-wit and sweetly sentimental for lots of reasons, including Martin Sheen and Sally Field as Peter's Uncle Ben and Aunt May and a peroxide-haired, superbad Emma Stone as a gently ironic Gwen Stacy, Peter Parker's first girlfriend. A bit-- how do you say-- *boring* in the comics, Gwen is retrofitted here with personality and independence, a damsel in only moderate distress. Denis Leary, as Captain Stacy, father of Gwen, evinces his signature growly sarcasm and hits unexpectedly sweet notes of paternal affection. **(PG-13)** Chris Packham. Countywide.

FOR GREATER GLORY Boasting such attributes as a rich, unmined vein of history for its subject matter, the Biblical landscape of northern Mexico for its backdrop, and faith tempered in the fire of battle at its heart, *For Greater Glory* has all the ingredients of a meaty historical epic laid out for it. Unfortunately, first-time director Dean Wright's Anglophone Mexican superproduction—a revanchist, Catholic answer to the leftist "Zapata westerns"—makes a hash of everything: It is plodding, lazily filmed, gassy with James Horner's score, and pads its runtime only by way of tolling repetition. *For Greater Glory* takes place during the Cristero War of 1926 to 1929, in which devout Mexicans took up arms against the anti-clerical government of President Calles (Rubén Blades), who actively prosecuted the historically counterrevolutionary Catholic Church. The sloppily fit-together tiles of screenwriter Michael James Love's historical mosaic depict agnostic General Velarde (Andy Garcia) reluctantly drilling rebellious rancheros and warrior-priests into the guerrilla army of the "Cristeros," the backroom negotiations of U.S. ambassador Dwight Morrow (Bruce Greenwood), and the martyrdom of crusading children and clergymen—including an exhumed Peter O'Toole, expiating sins while unhappily evoking *Lawrence of Arabia.* This bloated mess's crass piety invites a response from Whit Stillman's *Damsels in Distress*: "Vulgarity is, in essence, blasphemous." **(R)** Nick Pinkerton. Century Stadium 25, Orange.

KATY PERRY: PART OF ME A movie about a woman who makes a living selling a drag exaggeration of female sexuality stripped of actual sex for consumption by children, *Katy Perry: Part of Me* is completely uninterested in the contradictions that propel Perry's persona. Instead, directors Dan Cutforth and Jane Lipsitz track Perry's odyssey from failed teenage gospel singer to Alanis Morissette wannabe to world-beating superstar who learns while on tour that she has broken the record for most number-one singles off a single album for any female star, ever. The film (presented in never-less-necessary 3-D) documents Perry's 2011 world concert tour, weaving together onstage and backstage footage while video diaries dating back a decade suggest Perry has been filming herself in preparation for this moment. The filmmakers seem primarily interested in Perry's concerts as a source of b-roll illustration (the hyper-cutty pace means numbers are rarely shown from beginning to end). An early shot of a pre-celebrity Perry posing with Judy Garland's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame turns out to be Chekhovian: *Part of Me* later takes a cue from Garland's great *A Star Is Born,* depicting Perry's ability to snap out of a crying jag (sparked by her then-marriage to Russell Brand) when it's time to go onstage to sing "The One That Got Away" (the song title itself an echo of Garland's *Star* ballad "The Man That Got Away"). Like Garland's character, Perry's character (and it is a character) turns personal loss into professional power, sacrificing herself to the crowd to be resurrected by their devotion. **(PG)** Karina Longworth. Countywide.

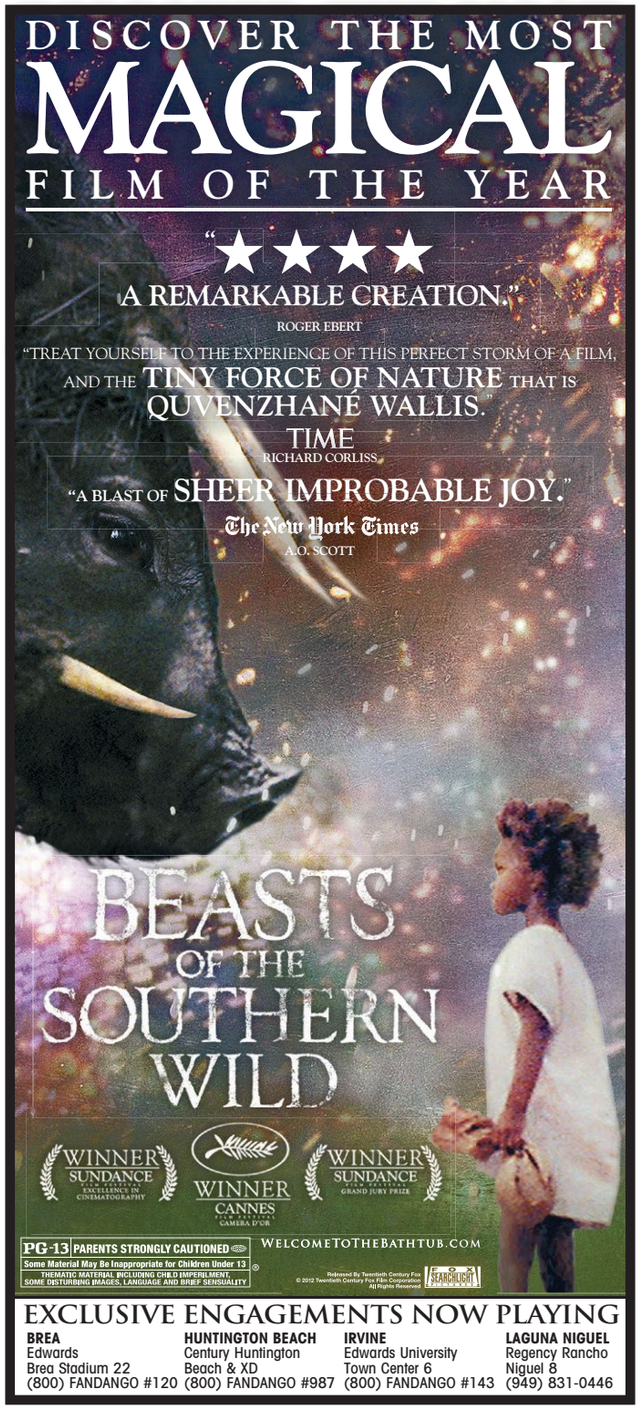
SAFETY NOT GUARANTEED With her high cheekbones, feline brown eyes, and heart-shaped mouth, actress Aubrey Plaza is bombshell hot. But in an unusual twist for a twentysomething performer, Plaza's natural foxiness is a resource that has gone largely unexploited. She's never cast purely to pretty up the place. If anything, she's there to put the pretty in their place. All of which makes it interesting that *Safety Not Guaranteed* -- a road-trip rom-com with a light sci-fi spin that screenwriter Derek Connolly wrote with Plaza in mind -- is both the first big starring role for Plaza and also the first movie to acknowledge her hotness. Reporter Jeff (Jake Johnson), on assignment to write an exposé on a guy searching for a time-travel partner, suggests that his intern Darius (Plaza) use the fact that she's a "beautiful woman" to get the story. A typical Plaza tough cookie patly softened by her pre-opening-credits admission that her sarcastic facade can be traced back to the death of her mom, Darius calls Jeff out for "dangling my vagina out there like bait." And then she does what she's told to gain entry into the weird world of Kenneth (Mark Duplass), a hermit loner who claims to have built a time machine. Plaza and Duplass have an easy, charming chemistry, and plot contrivances aside, as indie-film nerd-mances go, this one is genuinely sweet. **(R)** Karina Longworth. Countywide.

SAVAGES See "High Fantasy," page 33.

SEEKING A FRIEND FOR THE END OF THE WORLD What's missing from first-time director Lorene Scafaria's Steve Carell–vehicle misfire is the one element any apocalypse narrative suffocates without—urgency. Scafaria, screenwriter of the chipper, inexplicably lauded *Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist,* has created an end-times comedy that's by turns bizarrely affectless and prattlingly manic, much like its dual protagonists, insurance salesman Dodge Petersen (Carell at his most downcast) and his perky neighbor Penny (a seriously unwound Keira Knightley), who light out together—along with a charming terrier—days before an asteroid is set to destroy the planet. Their goals: to track down his first love and a flight to the U.K., so Penny can spend doomsday with the folks. The reckonings and realizations fly once *Seeking a Friend for the End of the World* hits the road, and for all the absurdity of these characters achieving perfectly articulated peace with their past demons as the world ends (I'm guessing pants-shitting panic would be more the norm), it's a relief after the excruciatingly unfunny first act in which Scafaria (who also wrote the film) floats the notion that sticking to routine in the presence of overwhelming chaos is a way of giving life meaning. That's fair, but she conveys this with so little irony or insight that Dodge's workmates, domestic servant, and a T.G.I. Friday's–esque waitstaff come off more as morons than heroes. *Seeking a Friend* achieves the colorless tedium of a safe, dozy dream of catastrophe instead of anything like the real deal. **(R)** Mark Holcomb. Countywide.

TED Fans of Seth MacFarlane's Fox mainstay *Family Guy* who wish he would run afoul of FCC regulations every week might be pleased with *Ted,* the story of a 35-year-old man and his foul-talking teddy bear. Plushies, too, might be turned on by the pot-smoking, whore-banging CGI toy ursus of the title, voiced by MacFarlane, making his feature-directing debut, which he co-scripted with *Family Guy* writers Alec Sulkin and Wellesley Wild. Other specialized demographics—namely, anyone over 15 who can't claim membership in either of the above groups—might sit in the theater in stony silence. *Ted's* overextended, desultory 104 minutes—which include a kidnapping, a car chase, a set piece propelled by Tiffany's "I Think We're Alone Now" video, and a Norah Jones concert—also operate on the premise that audiences can't resist having their baser instincts appealed to over and over again, especially when the filthy talk, gay panic, and racist jokes pour forth from as dissonant a figure as a stuffed animal. But does the bear really look that dissimilar to-- or function that much differently from-- Seth Rogen, Jonah Hill, Jason Segel, or any other round-bellied bad influence from movies made under the sign of Apatow during the past five years? Like its buddy-movie predecessors, *Ted* has a soft, squishy ending, one meant to vindicate the girlfriend (Mila Kunis) who insists John grow up, even if the film has so little use for her-- or any female who doesn't want to spread her legs for Ted. **(R)** Melissa Anderson. Countywide.

YOUR SISTER'S SISTER Beginning with a bilious toast and ending with a group hug, Lynn Shelton's *Your Sister's Sister*, her fourth film, expertly makes us squirm for about half its running time only to soothe us with empty pop-psych declarations. In Shelton's previous feature, the bolder *Humpday*, two straight guys, in a moment of perverse macho posturing, agree to do it with each other on camera, but *Your Sister's Sister* loses interest in the sexual awkwardness and anxiety and uncomfortable truths it sets up. Still, with each character in its central romantic triangle hiding a secret, the dialogue in *Your Sister's Sister* is often a funny combination of stammers, overexplaining, and nervous backtracking. This anodyne-by-design talk often gives way to lacerating revelations: "There'll be no talking behind anyone's back in this house," declares Jack (Mark Duplass, one of Humpday's dare-taking hets) at breakfast in the idyllic cabin he winds up sharing with half-sisters Iris (Emily Blunt) and Hannah (Rosemarie DeWitt), who, self-medicating with tequila after leaving her girlfriend of seven years, has abysmal 90-second sex with Jack. In these moments, the largely improvised script works well, exposing the jabs and parries of passive-aggressive behavior. It all unravels—rapidly and inexorably—however, becoming another movie entirely, filled with montages of cuddles, walks in the woods, and a regressed man's epiphany in a diner—a "healing" arc nearly indistinguishable from that found in nearly every comedy hybrid playing in multiplexes. This softening is all the more disappointing when compared with *Humpday's* closing scenes, which were ambiguous, discomfiting, and messy, just like the two characters at its center. **(R)** Melissa Anderson.Edwards University Town Center 6, Irvine; United Artists Marketplace, Long Beach.



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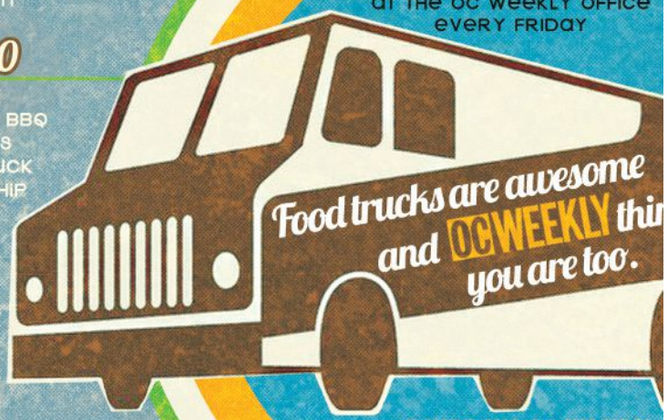

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Piggish

Art exhibit dedicated to Kelly Thomas has some good pieces, but others lack true insight

BY DAVE BARTON

It's 7:30 p.m., and I'm standing in line outside the packed PAS Gallery. There are 22 people ahead of me, waiting excitedly to see "Art With an Agenda: An Exhibit Inspired by Kelly Thomas." Within five minutes, there are 20 people standing behind me.

I've never had to wait in line to see an exhibit in Orange County. That the crowd—concerned citizens, children, bluehairs and hipsters, among others—is there to see artwork instigated by the tragic life and brutal death of Thomas, a schizophrenic homeless man beaten to an unrecognizable pulp by Fullerton police, is an extraordinary thing.

The gallery's opening salvo is a powerful one: Using the harrowing black-and-white surveillance video of the beating as inspiration, John M. Sollum (who co-curated with Stephan Baxter) has painted a series of small canvases, titled *Stations of the Cross*. Aside from the questionable religious title (more about that later), the murky confrontation between the mentally ill man and the aggressive officers moving silently toward a horrific ending quickly sets the tone. Andrea Bersaglieri also confronts the viewer with her modest work, *Kelly* and *Anonymous Kelly*. Variations on the same portrait of a young Thomas, with a large square obscuring his face in the latter, as viewers move from one picture to the other, their faces are reflected in the glass over the blank square. Using a completely different tact is Abraham Acosta's painting *Ragdoll*, awash in a pensive Van Gogh blue, with its subtle image of a toy missing an eye, the tiny face swollen and bandaged offering an unexpected poignancy.

If you've had the misfortune of watching the beating on YouTube or elsewhere, one of the most distressing things you'll hear is Thomas crying out for his father to help him. Ron Thomas wasn't present when his son was Tasered, kicked and pummeled with a flashlight, but someone calling for help to an unhearing father figure is echoed in the most moving picture in the show (and one that had me catch my breath to keep from crying), untitled and without the artist identified on the night I attended: A blown-up photograph of clouds in the sky with the words *Dad! Dad! Dad!* Photoshopped over them.

Susan Olsen's graphic *Still Life* takes a cop cliché—the doughnut—and succinctly turns it on its head by setting it on the ground in a pool of blood, illuminated only by a dropped flashlight. Equally strong is a photograph of a pair of hands pulling on rubber gloves in Christian Fuhrer's *Now See My Fists?* Bathed in a red-orange glow reminiscent of the light bar on a squad car, it feels intensely violent without showing a single drop of blood.

Much has been made about some of the in-your-face work in the exhibition, but if you've been to more than one art gallery during your lifetime, you've probably seen worse. The use of Thomas' brutalized face as art (Ricardo E. Gonsalves' *Sadistic Desire*, for example) is questionable to my mind, void of subtext as it is, but far worse is the poverty of imagination involved. With many of the artists reveling in reactionary "shocking" images of policemen as pigs—grotesque cops clutching celebratory hard-ons as they transform into pigs and encircle a forlorn Thomas; severed pig heads; "pig-traits" of Manuel Ramos and Jay Cicinelli, the two officers due to stand trial for Thomas' death, as scowling porkers; Rene Cardona's porcine beret-wearing, club-wielding *Fascist*—what's most head-shakingly pathetic is that these artists aren't offering any insight.

If an artist portrays the target of his ire in a reductive way as some *thing* lower than himself—an animal commonly (and incorrectly) associated with shit and stupidity—what makes his world-view all that better than that of the public servants who blatantly disregarded the humanity of their victim? The flip side of this is the equally moronic idea that homeless people are universally beatific angels, murdered by a society that destroys the saintly. While only a couple of artists falls prey to this, there are still far too many Christlike images of Thomas, dressed in white or with the suggestion of a halo. It's cheap and ridiculous—and too easy. Sentimentalizing mental illness and homelessness is just another tactic to push the uncomfortable away from us, letting us off the hook while simultaneously robbing those on the street of their fragile humanity. Fervency and passion (for justice *or* revenge) may explain the two extremes, but it doesn't excuse them. It also doesn't make good art.

Kelly Thomas deserves better.

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TRENDZILLA
» MICHELLE WOO

Secret Eyelashes

Since the days of Cleopatra, eyelashes have been a woman's secret weapon in glamour, youthfulness and seduction.

Which sucks because mine are pretty much nonexistent.

Like many Asians, I've been cursed with lashes that are fine and stick-straight. I've tried giving them a boost with mascaras that have names such as Colossal Volume, Lash Injection, Illegal Length and L'Extrême, though the results are hardly Kardashian quality. False eyelashes are the bolder alternative—they're cheap and work well for special occasions, but I'm always a little paranoid that a big sneeze or gust of wind will somehow dislodge them, making it appear as though I have centipedes hanging from my eyelids.

A friend recommended I try eyelash extensions. She'd been getting them regularly and loved how natural they looked. I have to admit, she did have a certain radiance these days, even when coming straight from the gym.

So I took my sad eyes to the well-reviewed Beyond Beauty Lashes, a tiny, one-chair salon inside a Garden Grove warehouse filled with poker supplies. Jenny Tran greeted me and explained the different extension options: Lengths range from natural to tarantula-leg dramatic, and you can choose either a synthetic material or mink, which feels more like human hair. (The mink is harvested by gently brushing live animals.) I opted for the mink in a cat-eye shape—longer along the outer edges.

With slow jams playing in the background, I lay with my eyes shut under a light as Tran carefully glued tiny hairs, one by one, to each of my lashes—about 80 to 120 per eye. I didn't feel much of anything for the most part, but I did smell the adhesive fumes. The entire process took about an hour.

When she was all done, Tran removed the protective tape from underneath my eyes and showed me a mirror. Whoa. I had eyelashes! My eyes instantly looked brighter, more defined, *sexier*. I batted them in amazement.

The extensions can last four to eight weeks before they'll slowly fall out on their own. There's not a whole lot of upkeep—you're given a little brush to nudge any strays back into place, but they'll mostly stay nice and curled. I only notice that there's something foreign on my face when I'm about to go to sleep and when I first wake up, as they're a bit stiff.

Over the past week, I've gotten a couple of "You look pretty today" compliments, though no one has pointed out the lashes specifically. They're subtle, which I appreciate. A secret weapon, indeed.

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BROSEFS FOR LIFE: (FROM LEFT) CHRIS EGGER, RYAN SMITH AND JEREMY HANNA

VINCENT MALVAEZ

Rawk Inkorporated

What happens when Sullen, one of OC's most popular bro brands, starts a local record label?

BY RYAN RITCHIE

For years, local brands such as Volcom and RVCA have cashed in on the link between music and fashion, endorsing hoards of nationally touring bands, presenting showcases and releasing compilations. These days, Sullen is also looking to get in on that action with its new record label, Sullen Musik, releasing its first 22-track compilation album, *Sullen Musik Vol. 1*, on Tuesday. While the sound is decidedly bro-centric, the album does take a few unexpected turns that could bode well for those seeking multiple avenues of aural aggression. But does a local brand known more for selling shirts than singles have a real shot at longevity when it comes to supporting bands?

Rob Burnelle of the Slow Forward thinks so. His band are the first to sign with Sullen Musik. "I'd be lying if I said that issue didn't come up," Brunelle says. "We had been speaking with a few more established labels at the time, but we loved the purely artistic direction that Sullen was headed with the label and the collective."

Sullen founders Ryan Smith and Jeremy Hanna say they want their pool of artists to be diverse—which doesn't necessarily mean innovative. The compilation's opening track, "Straight Subliminal" by Huntington Beach's John "Johnny G." Gillespie, is a Sublime-esque blend of hip-hop and pop written just for Sullen that sports a predictably promotional hook: "Rollin' with my Sullen family."

But Gillespie says it's more than just a catchphrase. "I called it 'Straight Subliminal' because I felt like I was part of a culture in the ink family, subliminally rising through art on canvasses to the ink on your skin," Gillespie says. "We are an art-driven family with an edge, and that's what I tried to portray."

Vol. 1 follows Johnny G.'s laidback sounds with the abrupt, metal-tinged detour of "Filthy Little Secret" by the Slow Forward, slammed with abrasive guitar riffs and Brunelle's throat-shredding howl. Though the Fullerton quartet are the first official Sullen band, they won't be the last, says Chris Egger, director for Sullen Musik/Sullen Clothing Public Relations. While not every act on the compilation will be signed to the label, Egger says, he expects the company to represent from five to 10 artists within the next 18 months.

> "We are an art-driven family with an edge and that's what I tried to portray."

Brunelle says being the initial band on a new, unconventional label shouldn't cause any problems for his group or their debut release, the 12-track *When We Are All*. "Our band have always been about exploring uncharted territory," he says, "so we think it's a great fit."

If Sullen's new label is going to be about diversity, it is definitely showing it on *Vol. 1*, which features a spectrum of sounds ranging from Illinois-based alternative-punk band Mest to Riverside reggae group Inhale, OC rapper Ca$his and Latin singer Andy Vargas (who fronts Carlos Santana's band).

Mixed in with the locals are some cameos from national acts that offer varying levels of credibility. A few signature flows from Cypress Hill's B-Real are a nice West Coast rap twist to the track list. But we probably could've done without the rhymes of Crazy Town's Seth "Shifty Shellschock" Binzer on "Lovin to You"—though we're glad he's alive and well outside VH1's *Celebrity Rehab*.

The ultimate goal of the compilation, Smith and Hanna say, is to continue the company's aligning with the surf, skate, graffiti and tattoo cultures that inspire its clothes while growing a grassroots collective of musical acts and visual artists. The album came out digitally via iTunes with hard copies to follow, but the marketing aspect is already having an impact on Lords of Ruin singer Lauren Boquette, who says his band's inclusion on *Vol. 1* has heightened his awareness of the Sullen line.

"It's an art-driven company, and music is the next logical step," he says. "They want to support the music and the scene that they are already a part of. You really can't ask for a better situation."

AskExene

» EXENE CERVENKA

Man Up, Mister!

DEAR EXENE: My wife (like you) has multiple sclerosis. She was diagnosed in 1996, although we suspect the initial onset occurred 30 years earlier due to an episode of optic neuritis. My problem is that I am an unemployed recovering alcoholic with ADD who is trying to cope with a wonderful woman who loves me but also seems to want to control me—to micromanage my life. Hanging over this are issues such as her mother's imminent demise (which would affect our living quarters, which are in her name), our transportation issues (a 20-year-old car that has seen better days) and continued worsening of her condition. I love her, and I want to help her, but sometimes I just feel overwhelmed. I love your music and words, and if you can give any advice—even a simple "man up!"—please do.

Love, Andrew

DEAR ANDREW: I was diagnosed with MS off and on for 17 years, and now I have finally been told no, I do not have it. I have something, but I don't know exactly what. But what I do know is that there is a lot of support for people with illnesses such as MS. Mrs. Andrew can contact the MS Society for person-to -person help.

It's hard times all over for most of us. Why aren't you working? Then you could get a decent vehicle. Don't say there are no jobs; there *are* jobs—just crappy ones. But money is money.

You have two excuses: ADD and recovery. Don't think those excuses are good enough. Mrs. Andrew is micromanaging? Is that because you aren't taking on any responsibilities? Are you cooking, cleaning, washing the dishes? Doing the laundry? Going grocery shopping? Mrs. Andrew is sick, probably fatigued, scared and losing a parent, and you should be eager to help her through all of it. Maybe this is about you being a giving, loving, grateful person, no matter how hard that is. Yes, man up.

Love, Exene

Exene Cervenka is a writer, visual artist and punk-rock pioneer. The OC transplant is the lead singer for X, the Knitters and Original Sinners. If you want to ask the legendary vocalist for advice—on your love life, politics, your musical career, Armageddon, filial relationships, anxiety over 2012—send an email to askexene@ocweekly.com.

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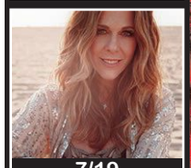
7/12 MODERN ENGLISH

7/13 BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY

7/15 HOWARD JONES

7/18 THE FIXX

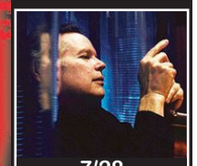

7/19 RITA WILSON

7/20 BILLY VERA

7/12 MODERN ENGLISH
7/13 BIG BAD VOODOO DADDY
7/14 OC BANDSTAND (11am-2pm) Ugly Paint / Kick-Start / Sweet Mojo / Modern Vitae
7/14 MUSIC FOR MEGS BENEFIT
7/15 HOWARD JONES performing "Human's Lib" and "Dream Into Action"
7/18 THE FIXX
7/19 RITA WILSON
7/20 BILLY VERA & THE BEATERS
7/21 MELVIN SEALS and JERRY GARCIA BAND
7/22 FACE TO FACE (Acoustic) performing songs from "Ignorance Is Bliss" / Jonny Two Bags & Salvation Town (Acoustic)
7/26 CRACKER
7/27 LOS RIOS ROCK SCHOOL
7/28 LEO KOTTKE
7/29 THE OUTSANE
7/31 GRANGER SMITH
8/3 DRAMARAMA
8/4 MEX-ZEPPELIN
8/9 FOOD FOR FEET
8/10 An Intimate Evening with the Legendary HELEN REDDY
8/11 "HOLLYWOOD BABBLE-ON" with KEVIN SMITH and RALPH GARMAN
8/12 JAMES DURBIN of American Idol / Delta Rose
8/16 REVEREND HORTON HEAT Pinata Protest
8/17 ABBA FAB (ABBA Tribute)
8/18 DICK DALE
8/19 GRANDMOTHERS OF INVENTION (members of FRANK ZAPPA'S MOTHERS OF INVENTION)
8/22 ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO Jesse Malin
8/23 MICHAEL FRANKS
8/24 LED ZEPAGAIN
8/25 MARC SEAL
8/26 An Evening with ERIC JOHNSON
8/29 MIDNITE
8/30 HAPA

7/22 FACE TO FACE

7/26 CRACKER


7/28 LEO KOTTKE

8/3 DRAMARAMA

8/10 HELEN REDDY

8/16 REVEREND HORTON HEAT

UPCOMING SHOWS

8/31 DAVID ALLAN COE
9/1 STEVE TYRELL
9/2 PATO BANTON
9/7 JOHN HIATT & THE COMBO
9/8 THE MOTHER HIPS
9/14 COCO MONTOYA
9/15 THE ULTIMATE STONES
9/20 TAB BENOIT
9/21 DAVE ALVIN and THE GUILTY ONES
9/22 ORANGE COUNTY'S FUNNIEST HOUSEWIVES
9/23 PONCHO SANCHEZ
9/27 AIMEE MANN *on sale 7/13
9/28 THE ENGLISH BEAT
10/3 KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD
10/6 DEBBIE REYNOLDS
10/12 SAVOY BROWN
10/18 LEON RUSSELL
10/26 DREAD ZEPPELIN
10/27 CASH'D OUT
10/31 COLT FORD
11/2 JANIVA MAGNESS
11/11 ASIA (all original members)
11/16 DAVE MASON
11/17 SUPER DIAMOND
11/28 UFO
11/30 DSB (Tribute to Journey)
12/1 TYRONE WELLS
1/21 MARC COHN

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COUCH SURFING

The Bright Side of the Great Recession

William Pilgrim and the All Grows Up find optimism and salvation in their new EP

BY LILLEDESHAN BOSE

You'd think an EP called *The Great Recession* would be a whiny, shadowy affair full of foreboding and dread, but the three-song set by William Pilgrim and the All Grows Up has a lilting optimism that belies its title. For all its talk of goodbyes, going to hell ("Farewell") and losing all the "sweet things" ("A Soldier's Tale"), there's nothing sad about it.

William Pilgrim and the All Grows Up want you to believe their gospel-driven blues songs, driven by Ishmael "Ish" Herring's raspy vocals, are deeper than they sound. There's talk about "consumption," the "corrupted social system" and the "receding shallows of the American Dream"—but with their easy, swinging vibe and joyous melodies, the songs counter all that.

For Herring, the juxtaposition is just about right. After all, he has used music to transcend hardship ever since he was a kid, being shuffled in and out of foster homes in Kansas City. "When I was a little boy, I was too short to reach a microphone," he recalls. "So I would take a chair, turn it on its side so the ends of the legs would be level with me [and sing]. I didn't even know what an audience was; I just knew I'd like to perform and sing."

The self-taught musician (he plays guitar, piano and drums) first tried his luck in New Orleans and landed in the streets. Herring then went for the ultimate American dream—and headed for Hollywood. "Lack of guidance, self-sabotage and a failing economy landed me on the streets of LA," the 27-year-old says. He stepped off the bus with $70 in his pocket "and the clothes I was wearing when I jumped on a Greyhound to come here." His first night in Hollywood, an insane tweaker attacked him with a knife. "I had no place to go or sleep, I had no life skills, and I had no idea what I was in for."

Luckily, he could sing. He posted a Craigslist ad asking for $100 for his vocal services, and Orange County producer PM Romero replied. "When he first contacted me, I ignored him for weeks," Herring says. Romero was working on a documentary-film project, and finding a musical collaborator was a huge plus. "Once I realized the scope and flavor of what he wanted to do, I was on board," Herring says, adding, "I was still homeless at the time—through our work, I was able to get set up with a place and have something to live on. He saved my life."

The duo named themselves William Pilgrim, after the protagonist in Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*. "We share a lot of likeness in our stories: questioning fate and free will and dealing with the illogical nature of human beings," Herring says. The All Grows Up, which is essentially PM Romero, was crucial in making sure *The Great Recession* was heard by the right people. Orange's Moonlight Graham Records and Exene Cervenka have championed them and released the three-song EP last June.

Herring—who has slept in alleys and abandoned houses, on street corners and underneath bridges—says he's in a much better situation now. "I live in a two-bedroom apartment with roommates and love it," he says. "It's great to be back in a place where I'm allowed to be."

But his favorite place to play will always be the street corner. "It's where the common man and the rich man intersect on the daily," Herring says. "Even if I get big and famous, you will catch me on Hollywood Boulevard with a guitar, hanging out with my folks from the gutter and swigging a bottle of rum with the dirtiest bums you've ever seen."

WILLIAM PILGRIM AND THE ALL GROWS UP
perform with the Manic Low at Moonlight Graham, 401 W. Chapman Ave., Orange, (714) 639-0084; www.moonlightgraham.net. July 28, 7 p.m. Free. All ages.

OC WEEKLY
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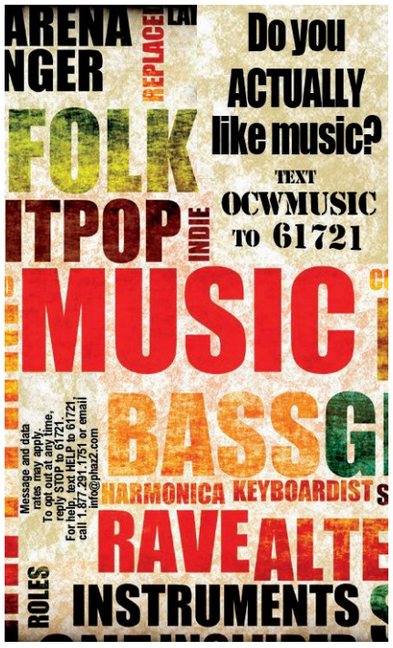

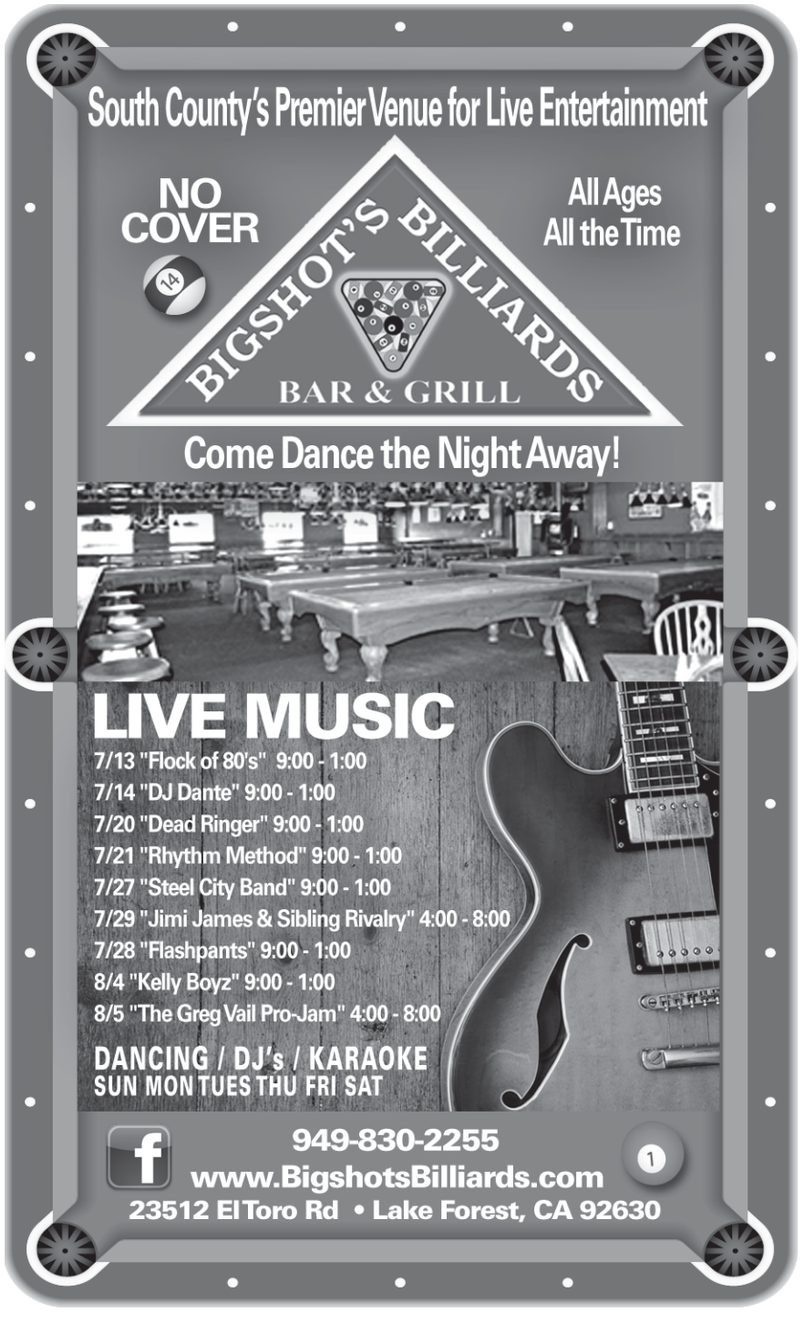

FEELING HIGH AND MIGHTY
JAY DIEBEL

LocalsOnly
» NATE JACKSON

Stonergaze

HIGHLANDS
perform with Spindrift, the Meek and Cosmonauts at Think Tank Gallery, 939 Maple Ave., Los Angeles, (916) 670-3801; www.thinktankgallery.org. July 28, 8 p.m. $10. All ages.

The opening scene of Highland's music video for "Railroads" centers on singer/guitarist Scott Holmes' slow immersion in a dark beach cave in which moving shadows and other stoner hallucinations abound. Surrounded by the band's waves of slowly mutating soundscapes and washed-out distortion, subtle harmonies and analog synth lull Holmes into a face-numbing sense fulfillment, a feeling the band try their damnedest to re-create live.

Though the Long Beach outfit fancy themselves as a shoegaze act, their tripped-out, guitar-heavy squall seems better suited for stargazing than anything else. Formed from the ashes of defunct Long Beach bands Bearface and Loftus, Holmes and his four band mates deliver Melvin-esque sludge metal with the catchy, echo-filled emotion of outfits such as Swervedriver and the Pains of Being Pure At Heart. It's a ghostly, drone rock-meets-dream pop concoction ideal for a fever dream voyage through a dark hole in the earth—or an inebriated night of dive-bar debauchery.

"We never really wanted to sound too much like any one thing, but our love for My Bloody Valentine put us all on the same page," guitarist Stephen Edmunds says. "We wanted to be something loud, with soundscapes and guitar and drum and bass."

Highlands' members have proven their commitment by going the distance for their sound—literally. Edmunds drives up from San Diego for practices and gigs. When they were first getting started, bassist Travis Cheney, who'd briefly relocated to Hawaii after graduating college and leaving Bearface, moved back to SoCal just to be in the band.

"They sent me some demo tapes, and they're like, 'We're starting a new band, and it's for real,'" Cheney says. "So I was like, 'Fuck it, I'm coming back.' I didn't want to play reggae."

With the recent addition of percussionist/synth player Beau Balek, the band have spent the past year crafting an independent debut album, *Singularity* (released June 26), a project that challenged them to construct their wall of sound slowly, then re-evaluate it brick by brick.

"Every song became something completely different by the end of [the process]," Holmes says. "If you listen to the demos we turned in and the final product, it was completely breaking everything down and building it up."

The band like to say they engaged their "Brian Eno pedal" on a number of tracks in the studio, taking their sound, which already causes walls inside local haunts such as the Prospector and Alex's Bar to rumble, and adding about 10 percent.

"We'd literally be pushing our engineer in the studio: 'Louder! Louder! More distortion!'" says drummer Chris Figlewicz. "We almost wanted ['Railroads'] to sound like an obnoxious drunk person pushing everyone around."

When listening at maximum volume in your creaky old sedan or windowless stoner-rock van, the result is something that pulls you in. This is especially true for the song "Evil," which, despite its title, takes you on a blissful voyage with emotive, Verve-style chord progressions. *Singularity* is a must for local fans who witnessed the band perform at several key festival gigs, including Desert Daze in Indio during Coachella and Moon Block Party in Pomona's downtown Arts Colony a few weeks ago.

As they prepare to ride the rest of their wave of summer shows, including a record-release show later this month, there are no solid guesses as to how more time onstage will transform the band's hybrid, shoegaze sound. Then again, Highlands were never really into following a particular sonic plan. In fact, Edmunds only has two simple criteria to keep him fired up about this band: "Keep it loud. Keep it weird."

HEY, ORANGE COUNTY / LONG BEACH MUSICIANS & BANDS! MAIL YOUR MUSIC, CONTACT INFO, HIGH-RES PHOTOS & IMPENDING SHOW DATES FOR POSSIBLE REVIEW TO: LOCALS ONLY, OC WEEKLY, 2975 RED HILL AVE., STE 150, COSTA MESA, CA 92626. OR EMAIL YOUR LINK TO: LOCALSONLY@OCWEEKLY.COM.

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concert*guide

this week

THURSDAY, JULY 12

AARON LEWIS: 8 p.m., $41 in advance. House of Blues, 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim.

BELLA NOVELA: 8 p.m., $5. Detroit Bar, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, 949-642-0600, www.detroitbar.com.

MODERN ENGLISH: The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano, 949-496-8930, www.thecoachhouse.com.

SEA WOLF: 8 p.m., $13. Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.constellationroom.com.

SERIOUSLY SONDHEIM: Featuring the music of Steven Sondheim, 8 p.m., $20. Saddleback College McKinney Theatre, 28000 Marguerite, Mission Viejo, 949-582-4500, www.saddleback.edu/arts/.

FRIDAY, JULY 13

FAT JOE: 8 p.m., $20. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

SEDERRA: 9 p.m., free. The Slidebar Rock-N-Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com.

WILLIE NELSON & FAMILY: 8 p.m., $29.50. Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, 714-708-1870, www.pacamp.com.

SATURDAY, JULY 14

BETTY BLOWTORCH: 9 p.m., $10. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

BRANDON DE LA CRUZ: 10 p.m., free. The Night Owl, 200 N. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton, 714-525-0305, www.thenightowlfullerton.com.

FLYING CARS: 9 p.m., $8. DiPiazza's Restaurant & Lounge, 5205 E. Pacific Coast Hwy., Long Beach, 562-498-2461, www.dipiazzas.com.

JACK GRISHAM: 9 p.m. Tiki Bar, 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-270-6262, www.tikibaroc.com.

LA SERA: 5 p.m., $12-$14. The Glass House, 200 W. Second St., Pomona, 909-865-3802, www.theglasshouse.us.

THE MATADORS: 9 p.m., $10. The Juke Joint, 735 N. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim, 714-778-1397, www.thejukejointbar.com.

PONCHO SANCHEZ: 1 p.m., free with festival admission. Laguna Beach Festival of Arts, 650 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach, 949-494-1145, www.foapom.com.

SERIOUSLY SONDHEIM: Featuring the music of Steven Sondheim, 8 p.m., $20. Saddleback College McKinney Theatre, 28000 Marguerite, Mission Viejo, 949-582-4500, www.saddleback.edu/arts/.

SUNDAY, JULY 15

MATISYAHU: 7 p.m., $19.75. Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, 714-708-1870, www.pacamp.com.

MONDAY, JULY 16

SERIOUSLY SONDHEIM: Featuring the music of Steven Sondheim, 8 p.m., $20. Saddleback College McKinney Theatre, 28000 Marguerite, Mission Viejo, 949-582-4500, www.saddleback.edu/arts/.

TUESDAY, JULY 17

PHIL SHANE: 7 p.m., free. Original Mike's, 100 S. Main St., Santa Ana, 714-550-7764, www.originalmikes.com.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 18

AN EVENING WITH YANNI: Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, 714-556-2746, www.scfta.org.

THE FIXX: 8 p.m., $20. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, Ste. C, San Juan Capistrano, 949-496-8930, www.thecoachhouse.com.

THURSDAY, JULY 19

ADAM LAMBERT: 7:45 p.m., $29.50. Pacific Amphitheatre, 100 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, 714-708-1870, www.pacamp.com.

BIG TIME RUSH: 7 p.m., $14-$73. Verizon Wireless Amphitheater, 8808 Irvine Center Dr., Irvine, 213-480-3232.

BIRDHAND: 9 p.m., $5. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

THE METEORS: 8 p.m., $17. Constellation Room at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, 714-957-0600, www.constellationroom.com.

SPACEGHOSTPURRP: 7:30 p.m., $15. Chain Reaction, 1652 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, 714-635-6067, www.allages.com.

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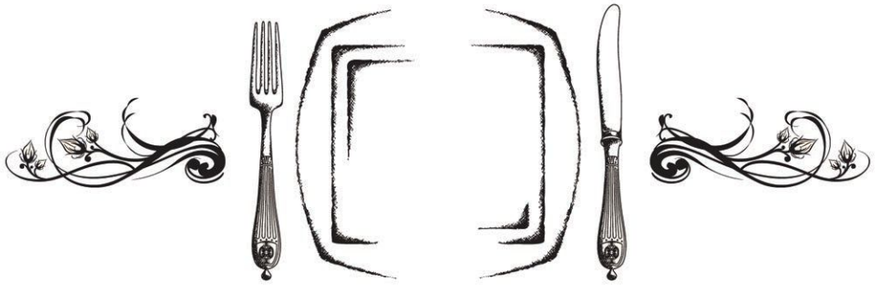

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TICKETS ON SALE JULY 13TH

club*guide

rock

DOLL HUT: 107 S. Adams St., Anaheim, 714-533-1286, www.myspace.com/newhut. **Wed:** 9 p.m., Hump Night, free.

THE PIKE BAR & FISH GRILL: 1836 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, 562-437-4453, www.pikelongbeach.com. **Wed:** July 18, 9 p.m., DJ D Train, free.

THE SLIDEBAR ROCK-N-ROLL KITCHEN: 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-871-7469, www.slidebarfullerton.com. **Tue:** 9 p.m., '80s Night.

TIKI BAR: 1700 Placentia Ave., Costa Mesa, 949-270-6262, www.tikibaroc.com. **Tue:** 7 p.m., Rock Band 2uesdays, unleash your inner rock star, free.

blues

HARVELLE'S LONG BEACH: 201 E. Broadway, Long Beach, 562-239-3700. **Wed:** 9:30 p.m. Whiteboy James and the Blues Express, $5.

HOUSE OF BLUES: 1530 S. Disneyland Dr., Anaheim, 714-778-2583, www.hob.com/anaheim. **Thu:** 10 p.m., Rockin' the Blues, free.

dance

ALEX'S BAR: 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, 562-434-8292, www.alexsbar.com. **Wed:** 9 p.m., Sugarlight Girls.

COMMONWEALTH LOUNGE & GRILL: 2406 Newport Beach Blvd., Newport Beach, 949-675-4444, www.commonwealthlounge.com/newport/. **Thu:** 9 p.m., Eros Thursdays, free.

THE RANCH RESTAURANT AND SALOON: 1025 E. Ball Rd., Anaheim, 714-817-4200, www.theranch.com. **Wed, Fri-Sat:** 8:30 p.m. Live Band, $10.

VELVET LOUNGE: 416 W. Fourth St., Santa Ana, 714-664-0663, www.velvetoc.com. **Fri:** Flex Friday.

XALOS BAR: 1160 N. Kraemer Blvd., Anaheim, 714-632-0390, www.xalosbar.com. **Fri:** 9 p.m., X-Lounge, featuring DJ Santa Rosa.

country

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dj

COMMONWEALTH LOUNGE: 112 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, 714-525-8888, www.commonwealthlounge.com. **Thu:** 5 p.m., Ladies' Night, with DJ Cocoe, free; **Thu:** 9 p.m. DJ Jay Scott, free. **Sat:** 9 p.m., DJ Lito.

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CLUB RIPPLES: 5101 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, 562-433-0357, www.clubripples.com. **Thu:** 8 p.m., The Dreamgirls Revue.

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latin

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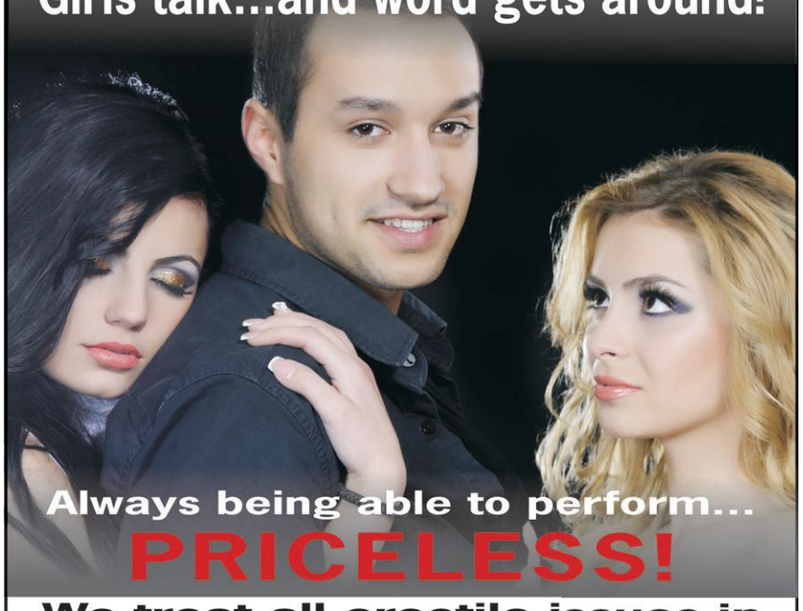

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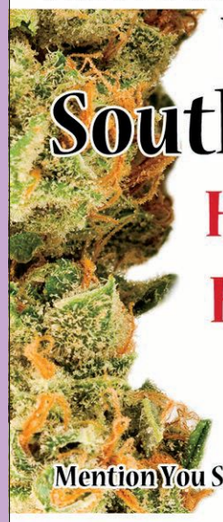

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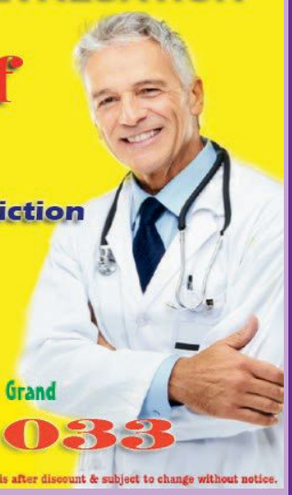

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savage love»

» DAN SAVAGE

I'm a smart, professional woman in my mid-30s who dates the same. I also happen to use a wheelchair; I was diagnosed shortly after my first birthday with a motor neuron disease. I have about as much physical strength as a quadriplegic, but I have full sensation. (Boy howdy, do I!) I am careful about who I date because of my physical dependence on the people around me. I am also wary of folks who call themselves "devotees"; these are individuals with disability-related fetishes. They gravitate toward amputees, but some are attracted to women in chairs. I'm not sure what about this bothers me so much; I suppose it feels reductionist, and I've spent my adult life becoming more than a girl in a chair.

I'm sure you can see where this is going. I started dating a lovely, successful, witty, beautiful woman a little more than a year ago. As time progressed, it became clear we were sexually compatible. Things have been great. At the eight-month point, I told my BFF that this might be "the one." At the nine-month point, she confessed to being a devotee. I was crushed. But I trusted her, as I had gotten no icky feelings from her. Then she said she wanted to try using my chair during sex—except with our roles reversed. Because I try to be GGG, I consented, as long as she agreed to couples therapy, which she did. In therapy, she said she had no idea I was in a chair before we met—which is plausible, as it was a blind date—and she just felt lucky when I showed up in a chair, and then didn't know how to tell me. So . . . we've been working it out.

Until last night. We were out with friends when she asked me to take a picture on her phone, and I found pics of me from the neck down (clothed, thank god) and ones of my chair. I quickly sent them to myself, and later, I checked them against Google Images. My fears were confirmed: She's been posting these photos, without my consent, to "devotee" websites. I feel sick and heartbroken. I haven't confronted her yet.

What do I do, Dan? In every other way, this woman's a catch, and I really care about her. At the same time, I feel like my trust has been horribly violated. Is it time to DTMFA?

Girl In Massive Pain

Yes, GIMP, it's time to DTMFA.

And you gotta dump the motherfucker like you mean it. You can't be a lesbian about this. No "taking a break," no "putting things on hold," no "scheduling an appointment" with your couples counselor. You're dumping her. The end.

Your soon-to-be-ex-girlfriend needs to understand that as a direct result of her unbelievably selfish actions, she was promptly and unambiguously *dumped*. It's the only way this motherfucker will ever be able to wrap her head around just how thoroughly she violated you. (It doesn't help that she lies to you—I mean, excuse me, but who sets a friend up on a blind date with someone in a wheelchair without mentioning that fact?) And now, thanks to her, pictures of you are floating around fetish websites. Your soon-to-be-ex-girlfriend destroyed your sense of sexual safety and shat all over the trust that had been placed in her by her dream girl. (That would be you.) And for what? A cheap thrill? Bragging rights?

Dump the motherfucker already.

And then, after your ex has had some time to wallow in regret (you were the girl of her dreams!) and self-recrimination (how could she have been so fucking stupid!), give her a call. Depending on what you hear—hopefully, you'll hear an extended apology and that she's in therapy—you can make up your mind about whether you wanna TTMFB: "take the motherfucker back."

It sounds as though your girlfriend has many good qualities and that you two clicked. Maybe your girlfriend can be salvaged. Maybe losing you will be the shock she needs to get help. If it is—if she went and got help *of her own accord*, not because she thought it would win you back (because that wasn't on the table)—then bizarro DTMFA ("date the motherfucker again") might be an option. But you two should start seeing a counselor together if you TTMFB, you should take things four times as slowly this time, and she should get a phone that doesn't have a camera.

I'm a straight 32-year-old woman who has been in a monogamous relationship with a guy for two years. Recently, we took the plunge and moved in together. Before moving in, we had experimented with some kinky stuff. (I have never come so hard or fast as the first time I fucked him in the ass with a strap-on.) Then he told me that he had given some thought to poly relationships before committing to me. Now I am feeling insecure about the viability of this relationship. Although he claims no desire to be in a poly situation now, I can't help but feel I alone will ultimately not be able to fulfill him entirely. He is a soul mate whom I can see growing with over time. But I worry this relationship is doomed.

Fem Fetish Frosh

This probably isn't what you want to hear, but here goes: You alone will ultimately never be able to fulfill your boyfriend entirely . . . just as he alone will never be able to fulfill you entirely. One person simply can't be all things to another person—sexually or otherwise—and unmet needs, unfulfilled desires and unexplored possibilities are prices we pay to be in LTRs. Monogamous, polyamorous, Femdom or whatever: All coupled people walk around feeling a little unfulfilled. (Single people, too.) Because no one gets everything they want.

So, while some aspects of the polyamorous lifestyle appeal to your boyfriend, he has decided he prefers the kind of relationship he's in now, with its perks and drawbacks, to the hypothetical polyamorous scenarios he used to contemplate, which would've had their own perks and drawbacks. I'd say your relationship is only doomed if you can't bring yourself to take his "yes"—yes to you, yes to monoamory—for an answer.

My husband and I have been together for three years, and we're not having as much sex as we used to. A big part of the problem: In the time we've been together, he has put on a lot of weight. I'm not looking to blame his weight gain for my libido issues. I just need to shut up and put out more, and I'm working on that. But I'm wondering if it's ethical to suggest incentivizing his weight loss with more sex, such as sex every time he drops 3 pounds, followed by sex once a week once he hits his target weight? I don't think losing the beer belly will make me want to drop my pants all the time, but it couldn't hurt, right?

Like Boys Slimmer

If you think your husband would respond positively to the challenge—if he's not weepily sensitive about his weight, if he likes set goals and specific rewards—then I think you should toss this proposal on the table right next to that bag of Doritos. Of course, I couldn't give you the same advice if the genders were reversed because . . . well, it looks like we're out of room. So we'll have to leave the gendered politics of fat for a future column.

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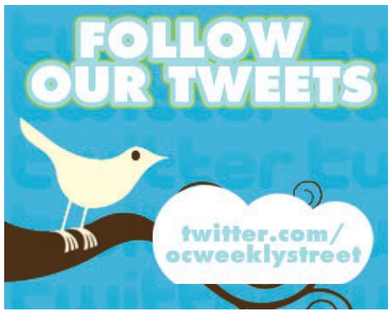

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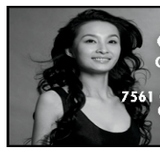
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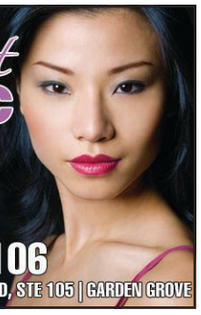
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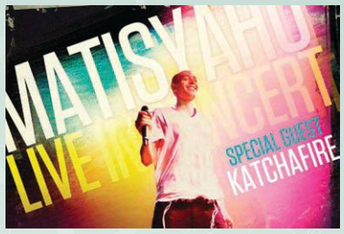
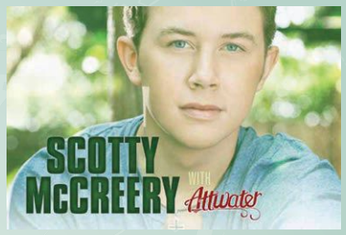
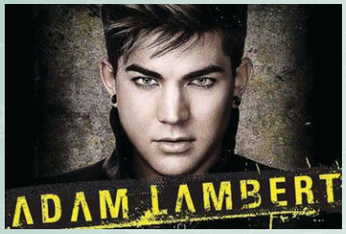
JULY 14



JULY 15



JULY 18

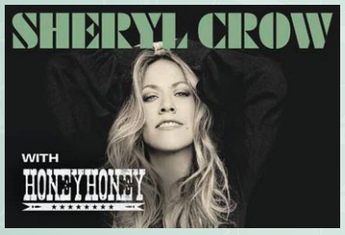


JULY 19

JULY 20

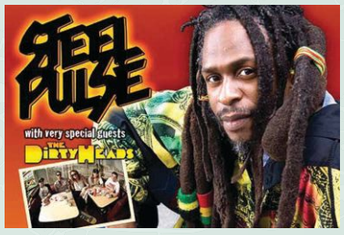
JULY 21

JULY 22



JULY 25

JULY 26



JULY 27

JULY 28

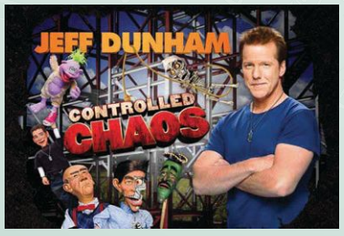
JULY 29

AUGUST 1

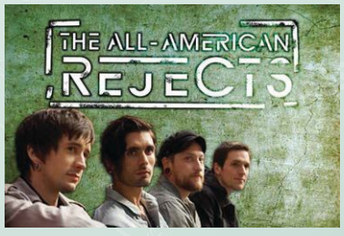
AUGUST 2

AUGUST 3

AUGUST 4



AUGUST 5



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- Variety of tobaccos including flavored stones
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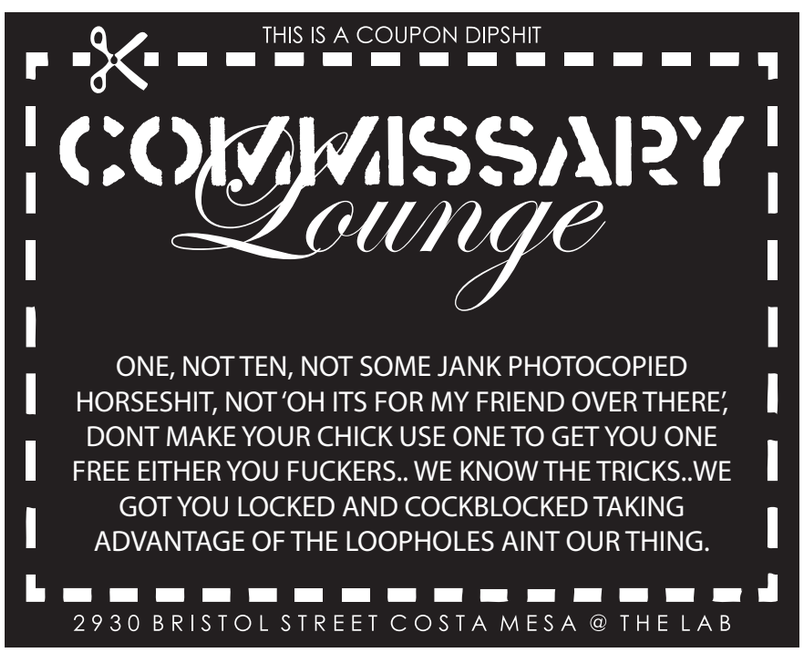
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Saturday, July 28th: Cancer Fundraiser w/ KROQ

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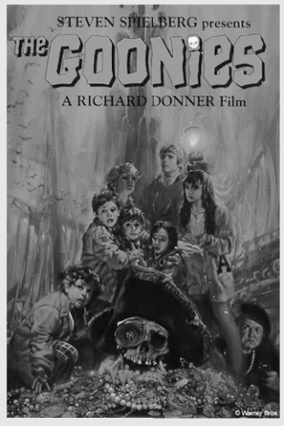
Saturday
JULY 21ST
GOONIES
7-10PM



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AUGUST 24TH
BACK TO THE FUTURE
7-10PM

7pm Bar and Grill Open
8pm Movie Starts
(exact time depends on when it gets dark enough)

NO outside food and beverage allowed

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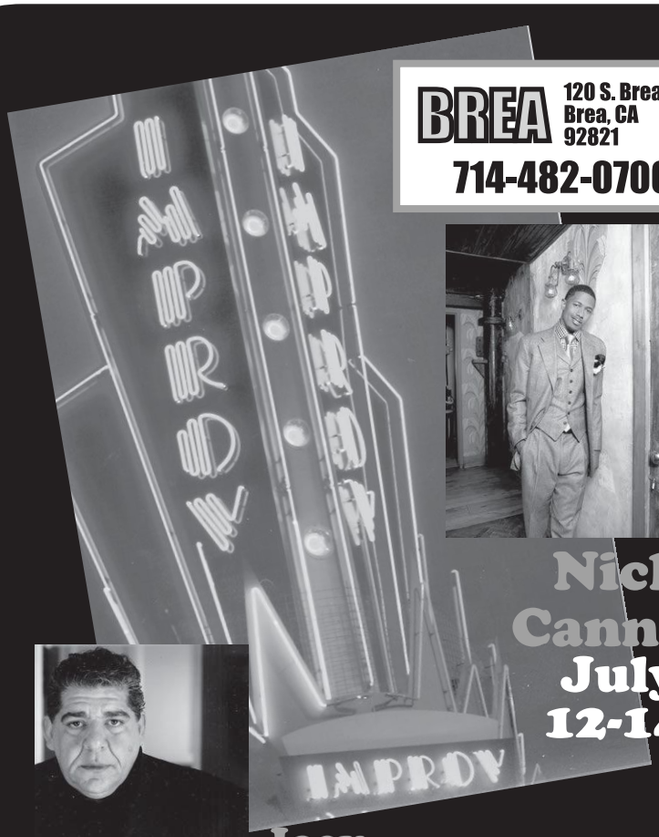

Nick Cannon
July 12-14

Joey Diaz
July 15

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Aug 1

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